

Oldham Borough Council



**Council Meeting
Wednesday 12th November
2025**

OLDHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

To: ALL MEMBERS OF OLDHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL,
JR CLYNES BUILDING GREAVES STREET, OLDHAM

Tuesday, 4th November 2025

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council which will be held on Wednesday 12th November 2025 at 6.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Level 2, JR Clynes Building, Cultural Quarter, Greaves Street, Oldham, OL1 1AL, for the following purposes:

Item No

- 1 To receive apologies for absence
- 2 To receive declarations of interest in any matter to be determined at the meeting
- 3 To deal with matters which the Mayor considers to be urgent business
- 4 To receive communications relating to the business of the Council
- 5 To receive and note petitions received relating to the business of the Council
(time limit 20 minutes)
There are no petitions for this meeting of the Council to consider.
- 6 Leader's Annual Statement
(10 minutes)
Leader to address Council
- 7 Youth Council
(time limit 20 minutes)
There is no Youth Council business to consider.
- 8 Public Questions
(time limit 15 Minutes)
- 9 Questions to Leader and Cabinet (Pages 1 - 76)
(time limit 90 minutes)
 - a. Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Growth – including the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held 21st July, 8th September, 22nd September and 20th October 2025; the minutes of meeting of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority held 22nd August and 26th September 2025.

- b. Statutory Deputy Leader and Neighbourhoods Portfolio Holder
- c. Deputy Leader and Finance, Corporate Services and Sustainability Portfolio Holder
- d. Children and Young People's Portfolio Holder
- e. Adults, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder
- f. Education and Skills Portfolio Holder
- g. Culture and Leisure Portfolio Holder
- h. Enterprise Portfolio Holder
- i. Transport and Highways Portfolio Holder

10

Notice of Administration Business

(time limit 30 minutes)

Motion 1: Improving Parking Provision at Royal Oldham Hospital

To be Moved by Cllr Zahid Chauhan

to be Seconded by Cllr Barbara Brownridge

This Council notes:

- That Royal Oldham Hospital provides essential health services for thousands of Oldham residents every week, including emergency, maternity, and specialist care.
- That patients, visitors, and NHS staff frequently report serious difficulties finding parking spaces at and around the hospital site.
- That parking shortages lead to missed or delayed appointments, added stress for patients and families, and unfair parking fines for staff and visitors.
- That the hospital's current car park layout cannot meet the increasing demand from both hospital users and staff.

This Council believes:

- That access to healthcare should not be made more stressful by inadequate or unaffordable parking.
- That a multi-storey car park or other expanded parking solution would significantly improve accessibility and patient experience without consuming additional land.
- That NHS staff, particularly those working long or unsociable hours, should have access to safe and affordable parking.
- That dedicated and accessible parking should be available for people with mobility issues and wheelchair users.

This Council therefore resolves to:

1. Request that Oldham Council works collaboratively with the Northern Care Alliance NHS Foundation Trust (NCA) and relevant partners to explore options for:
 - a. Developing a multi-storey or expanded car park at or near Royal Oldham Hospital;
 - b. Introducing fair and affordable parking arrangements for patients attending A&E, those with regular appointments, and NHS staff;
 - c. Creating dedicated parking directly opposite the A&E department for patients attending A&E only;
 - d. Improving access and facilities for wheelchair users and those with

mobility needs.

2. Write to the Chief Executive of the NCA and the Greater Manchester Integrated Care Board (ICB) expressing this Council's support for urgent improvements to parking provision at Royal Oldham Hospital.
3. Request that Oldham's Members of Parliament lobby the national government and publicly support a campaign for better parking provision for Oldham residents attending Royal Oldham Hospital.

Motion 2: Strengthening Standards and Transparency for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

To be Moved by Councillor Hindle

To be Seconded by Councillor Hince

At its meeting of 16th July 2025, this Council resolved to implement an Article 4 Direction in relation to small HMOs, this Direction will come into effect on 1st January 2026, meaning planning applications must be made to convert a dwelling-house (C3) to a House in Multiple Occupation (C4).

The Housing Act 2004 and The Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation Regulations 2018 define an HMO and set out the framework of Licensing responsibilities that sit with local authorities.

This motion is the next step in raising standards for HMOs in the Borough of Oldham, sending a clear message to residents and landlords that we take our duties and responsibilities seriously, and that we want the highest standards permitted by legislation.

This Council notes:

The persistent concerns raised by residents regarding substandard living conditions, overcrowding, fire safety risks, and poor management practices in some HMOs. That while statutory standards exist under the Housing Act 2004 and the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), enforcement and transparency vary significantly across local authorities.

This Council resolves to:

1. To review and strengthen local HMO Standards by:
 - a. Undertake a comprehensive review of current HMO licensing and amenity standards within the borough.
 - b. Introduce enhanced minimum requirements for space, fire safety, sanitation, and kitchen facilities, drawing on best practices from other councils.
 - c. Ensure that all licensed HMOs are subject to regular inspections and compliance checks.
2. To Improve Transparency and Accessibility for Complaints by:
 - a. Developing a clear, accessible online portal for residents to report concerns or complaints about HMOs.
 - b. Publishing quarterly data on HMO complaints, enforcement actions, and outcomes to improve public accountability.
3. To Enhance Resident Engagement and Support, by launching a public

awareness campaign informing residents of their rights and how to report unsafe or poorly managed HMOs.

11

Notice of Opposition Business

(time limit 30 minutes)

Motion 1: Tackling the Anti-Social Use of Off-Road Motorbikes, E-Bikes and E-Scooters

To be Moved by Councillor Williamson

To be Seconded by Councillor Marland

There has been a national spike in the anti-social use of off-road motorcycles, e-bikes, and scooters on UK roads and in public places.

And whilst there are trial schemes for e-bikes and e-scooters operating in Greater Manchester it is illegal for some vehicles and those not in trial schemes to be used on public highways and in public spaces.

There is a myth that the Police cannot do anything which is not true. The Police will act even when riders are not wearing helmets but only in a targeted approach made by trained officers. In fact, Greater Manchester Police (GMP) has a dedicated team of Officers.

This Council Acknowledges:

- That Greater Manchester Police's resources are finely stretched, and that Oldham Council cannot just ask for GMP to put resources into Oldham without a strongly evidenced basis.
- Oldham Council recognises that GMP officers will use up-to-date intelligence to help direct them to areas of concern. Recent successes have been seen with Operation Vulcan and Operation AVRO - Oldham must do its bit to help the Police.
- Most motorbike, e-bike, scooter riders, use their vehicles in a safe and considerate manner and abide by the law. Sadly, there are those that don't, and this poses a serious risk to not only themselves, but other road users also.
- People can easily purchase e-bikes or e-scooters blissfully unaware they are not intended for use on the public highway or in public spaces having a logic that 'if they weren't legal, they wouldn't sell them.'
- That Oldham Council must work more closely with communities and organisations to generate a campaign to advise our residents of how and when to report issues.
- Oldham Council must continue working alongside GMP, housing providers, other partners and communities to get a message out that is clear about what constitutes an irresponsible user so that those who pose no threat to others carry on enjoying them sensibly and legally, and those that are not can be dealt with appropriately

This Council is aware that:

- Criminals are also using these modes of transport to commit further crimes, including drug supply, burglary, and theft. The anti-social use of these vehicles causes misery within our communities, impacting on the quality of life and posing a danger to those using the region's roads and open spaces.
- **This Council believes that:**
Working closely with residents and partners not just the Police is key to tackling this behaviour.
- Greater Manchester Police officers will use up-to-date intelligence to help direct them to areas of concern to deter, detect and disrupt offences from taking place.

This Council resolves to:

1. Write to the Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police Sir Stephen Watson QPM thanking him, the Officers and staff of GMP and the National Police Air Service (NPAS) for their continued hard work and dedication in tackling the anti-social use of these vehicles and ask him to ensure that this remains a priority for Greater Manchester Police.
2. To write to the Home Office and ask for further dedicated funding for GMP to use in tackling the anti-social use of off-road motorbikes, electric bikes and electric scooters.
3. To use Oldham Council's Media team and ask them to carry out a campaign educating the public into the legalities of these vehicles and encouraging residents to help build up an intelligence-led picture so that GMP can carry out targeted operations by reporting instances and homes suspected of housing anti-social users which can be done anonymously.
4. Ask housing providers such as First Choice Homes, Great Places, Guinness Partnership to work with Oldham Council's media team and develop and plan of education and intelligence to support GMP in operations to tackle the anti-social use of off-road motorbike, e-scooters, and e-bikes.

Motion 2: Fair Access and Funding for Non-Invasive (Digital)

Post-Mortems

To be Moved by Councillor Akhtar
To be Seconded by Councillor Zaheer Ali

Background:

Council notes that when a death is sudden, unexplained, or occurs in circumstances requiring investigation, the Coroner is legally required to establish the cause of death through a post-mortem examination.

Traditionally, this has meant an invasive surgical autopsy an intrusive procedure that can be distressing for families, delay burials for several days, and conflict with religious requirements for immediate burial.

These examinations typically cost between £400 – £800 per case, rising to several thousand pounds in forensic cases, and are funded by local authorities via the coronial service budget.

Recent advances now allow the same investigative purpose to be achieved using Post-Mortem Computed Tomography (PMCT) or MRI scanning, known as a non-invasive or digital post-mortem.

The scans are undertaken by radiographers, interpreted by radiologists, and can identify a cause of death in 85–90 % of cases. They are quicker, more dignified, and culturally sensitive.

However, funding arrangements remain inconsistent nationally.

- In authorities such as Lancashire, Blackburn with Darwen, Bradford, Leicester, and Sandwell, costs are fully met from the coronial budget, and families pay nothing.
- Where a local facility does not exist, or no inter-borough agreement is in place, bereaved families may currently be asked to pay £200–£650 privately to access a scan something the Chief Coroner's 2022 guidance discourages.
- Oldham, Rochdale, and Bury Councils have jointly agreed to procure a shared digital post-mortem service, due to be operational in 2026, with each authority meeting one-third of the cost.
- Oldham currently contributes a proportion of the Greater Manchester North Coroner's budget along with Rochdale and Bury.
- Digital post-mortem costs (average £300–£500) are comparable to invasive autopsy costs.
- This motion commits no additional expenditure beyond existing allocations but ensures that funding responsibility lies with the Council, not families.
- Any variations or pressures will be reviewed by the Section 151 Officer through normal budget processes.

Council Believes

- Every family should have access to a non-invasive post-mortem free at the point of need where the Coroner deems it appropriate.
- Faith sensitivity and compassion should be reflected in how post-mortems are conducted.
- Clarity is needed so that no family is ever charged privately when a non-invasive scan is ordered by the Coroner.
- Oldham can adopt the Lancashire model, ensuring costs are contained within the coronial service budget and compliant with Financial Procedure Rules.

Council Resolves

1. Agreement with Rochdale and Bury
2. That Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council (OMBC) formally agrees to Rochdale Council's request to participate in the joint procurement and delivery of the Digital Post-Mortem Services, contributing a proportion of

the total cost (based on population, and requests that Bury Metropolitan Borough Council likewise confirm its participation, ensuring consistent funding and governance across the Greater Manchester North Coroner's Service.

3. Free at Point of Need

That all non-invasive (digital) post-mortems authorised by the Greater Manchester North Coroner for Oldham residents be funded through Oldham's share of the coronial service budget, and that no bereaved family be charged directly.

4. Inter-Authority Funding Agreements

That the Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer enter discussions with partner councils and the Coroner's Office to ensure clear agreements are in place for payment of scans carried out outside the borough until the joint facility becomes operational in 2026.

5. Financial Compliance

That any implementation of this policy be carried out within approved budget allocations for the coronial service allocations to the coronial service, and subject to the approval of the Section 151 Officer under the Council's Financial Procedure Rules.

6. Public Awareness and Faith Engagement

That the Council work with local faith leaders, funeral directors, and NHS Bereavement Services to publicise the availability of non-invasive post-mortems and to support families requiring rapid burial.

7. Scrutiny and Reporting

That the relevant Scrutiny Board receive an annual report covering:

- the number of non-invasive vs invasive post-mortems;
- turnaround times;
- cost implications; and
- family satisfaction feedback.

Financial Implications (For noting)

- Oldham currently contributes a proportion dependant on population towards the Greater Manchester North Coroner Service budget, hosted by Rochdale MBC.
- Digital post-mortem costs (£300-£500 per case) are comparable to traditional autopsies.
- The proposal is therefore cost-neutral, committing no new expenditure beyond Oldham's existing allocation.
- Any variance will be reviewed by the Section 151 Officer during the annual budget process.

Motion 3: Protecting Community Cohesion and Public Services from Asylum Accommodation in Oldham

To be Moved by Councillor Woodvine

To be Seconded by Councillor Arnott

Conservative controlled Local Authorities – Epping Forest (Essex) and Great Yarmouth (Norfolk) – have challenged Serco and private sector providers of housing for illegal migrants and asylum seekers in their areas at the High Court.

This Council should follow their lead in seeking legal advice and challenging Home Office contracts to provide migrant housing in Oldham Borough.

This Council notes:

- So far in 2025, 25,000 people have crossed the Channel in small boats. Since July 2024, over 50,000 people have crossed the Channel, leaving immigration policy under this government in tatters.
- Since the Labour Party formed the UK Government there have been a record 111,000 asylum claims, claims for refugee status have hit a record high, and there has been an 8% rise in the use of hotel accommodation for asylum seekers.
- It is Conservative led councils that are taking real action to protect their residents, while other parties issue press releases and politically posture.
- The increasing pressures faced by local communities where hotels are designated for use as migrant accommodation without proper consultation or local input.
- The risk of non-hotel accommodation also being considered to house migrants in Oldham Borough.

This Council believes:

- That local communities must be properly consulted before significant decisions are made that impact local services, housing, and community cohesion.
- That the use of local hotels as long-term accommodation for migrants is not a sustainable solution and places disproportionate pressures on local infrastructure and services.
- That local councils, as the democratic voice of their communities, should have a say in how accommodation needs are managed and delivered.

This Council resolves:

1. To request the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Council's Director of Legal and Legal Services, to urgently assess the merits of seeking an injunction to prevent the use of local hotels for migrant accommodation where it is deemed to be in the best interests of the community.
2. To further request the Chief Executive to instruct Officers to consider every option and seek legal advice on using injunctions, stop notices and other planning enforcement against change of use to close asylum hotels in the council area, and prevent them from being opened.
3. To write to the Secretary of State for the Home Office expressing this Council's concerns about the use of hotels, and non-hotel accommodation, in the Oldham Borough for migrant accommodation and to request full consultation with this Council on any future decisions.
4. To call on the UK Government to develop a sustainable, properly planned, and community consulted approach to housing migrants.
5. To write to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, calling on the Government to adopt the Conservative proposals to clarify in law and policy beyond doubt that such asylum hotels should always require change of use.

To instruct the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport & Housing Delivery to

introduce the strictest limitations possible on housing / hospitality stock being converted to asylum accommodation in the Oldham Local Plan.

Motion 4: Stop the Boats

To be Moved by Councillor Quigg

To be Seconded by Councillor Wilkinson

Britain's borders are in chaos, and nearly everyday migrants from across the world are coming across the channel and then being housed in hotels and other accommodation, which is causing significant concern within local communities. These concerns range from safety to the pressures placed on local services. It is therefore only right that residents of our Borough and elsewhere can voice their concerns with elected representatives without being branded racist.

It is the position of Reform UK that those who come to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland illegally, should simply not be allowed to stay here. It is our position that if people are prepared to break the law to get into the country, then they are clearly willing to break the laws of the country. It is simply not fair to allow those who come here illegally to jump the queue. It is simply unfair that taxpayers are having to fund accommodation and other costs for those who come here illegally, especially those who have passed through multiple safe countries to get to this country.

We know that the huge pressures on housing for residents in our Borough impacts all our residents, but none more so than our veterans. It is why the Armed Forces Covenant is a promise from the nation to the people who serve or who have served in the Armed Forces, and their families, and that they are treated fairly. But despite the firm commitments set out in the Covenant, there are still too many veterans living in inappropriate accommodation, in hostels or on the streets.

It is Reform's position that we should be looking after our own people first, and most importantly our veterans.

We have to say to Home Office that enough is enough. The people of this Borough are at breaking point; the people of Britain are at breaking point.

This Council notes:

- 2025 has been one of the worst years ever for small boat crossings in the English Channel with over 36,734 people crossing the English Channel this year alone. Since July 2024, over 50,271 people have crossed the English Channel.
- Oldham Council has received grants for migrant support, including a £276,888 grant from the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) for a two-year Refugee Support Project focused on language, digital inclusion, and employment. The council also received an Asylum Dispersal Grant of £898,800 from the Home Office for the 2025-2026 financial year to assist with costs related to supporting asylum seekers.
- The safety of local communities has not been taken seriously by the

Home Office especially where hotels are designated for use by migrants. There have been several high-profile cases in the national media where serious crimes have taken place as a result of poor security and a lack of screening or background checks on migrants in these hotels.

- That residents who have genuine concerns have been sidelined and ignored by local and national authorities.
- That up to 3% of people sleeping rough in England are veterans. This means that around 300 to 400 veterans end up on the streets every year, and up to 4,000 require urgent support to find accommodation. Just one is one too many.

This Council believes:

- That local communities must be properly consulted before significant decisions are made that impact local services and housing.
- That the use of local hotels as long-term accommodation for migrants must end as places like Oldham have had disproportionate pressures placed on local infrastructure and services.
- That local councils, as the democratic voice of their communities, should have a say on who lives in our communities.

This Council resolves:

1. That the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Council's legal department, will seek all necessary legal instruments and/or injunction/s and or any legal measures as necessary to prevent the use of local hotels or HMO's for migrant accommodation in the Borough of Oldham.
2. The Chief Executive will write to the Home Secretary and Greater Manchester Police Chief Constable, expressing this Council's concerns about the use of hotels in our area for migrant accommodation and that those who come to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland illegally are held in properly managed facilities, and that they are not housed in hotels, houses of multiple occupation or within the community whilst they are being processed.
3. That the Chief Executive will write to Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government demanding that the government reverse the decision by the Labour government to scrap plans to limit social housing applications to long-term British residents – which would have introduced a 'UK connection test' to limit social housing to those resident for at least 10 years.
4. The Chief Executive will make sure that no veteran in Oldham is homeless and that they are housed swiftly and without delay, as one homeless veteran is one too many. If they served this country, then they should be looked after by this country.
5. That the Leader of the Council will immediately write to the Prime Minister (and will not send any other letter that counters the requests of this letter), to demand that they urgently implement the necessary legislation that:
 - a. If you enter the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland illegally, you are ineligible for asylum in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

- b. Make it a criminal offence for those who have already been deported to seek re-entry.
- c. Make it a criminal offence to deliberately destroy identity documents such as a passport etc
- d. Implement a lifetime ban on re-entry for those who have been deported.
- e. HM Government will seek to withdraw from the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR).

12 Members' Allowances Scheme 2025/2026 (Pages 77 - 94)

The Council is requested to determine a Scheme for Members' Allowances following consideration of a report of an Independent Remuneration Panel convened in accordance with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.

13 Oldham Council Annual Report 2024/25 (Pages 95 - 98)

To consider Oldham Council's Annual report – 2024/25

14 The Leading Oldham Partnership Impact Report 2024/25 (Pages 99 - 116)

To consider the Leading Oldham Partnership Impact Report for 2024/25.

15 Oldham Children, Young People and Families Plan 2025/26 (Pages 117 - 120)

The Council is requested to approve the Oldham Children, Young People and Families Plan 2025/26.

16 Electronic Voting (Pages 121 - 126)

A report seeking a change to the Constitution to enable electronic voting, and to clarify the procedure for use of electronic voting.

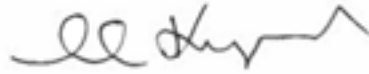
17 Review of Political Balance on Committees (Pages 127 - 134)

To update on recent changes that affect the Council's political balance.

18 Independent Member of Audit Committee (Pages 135 - 138)

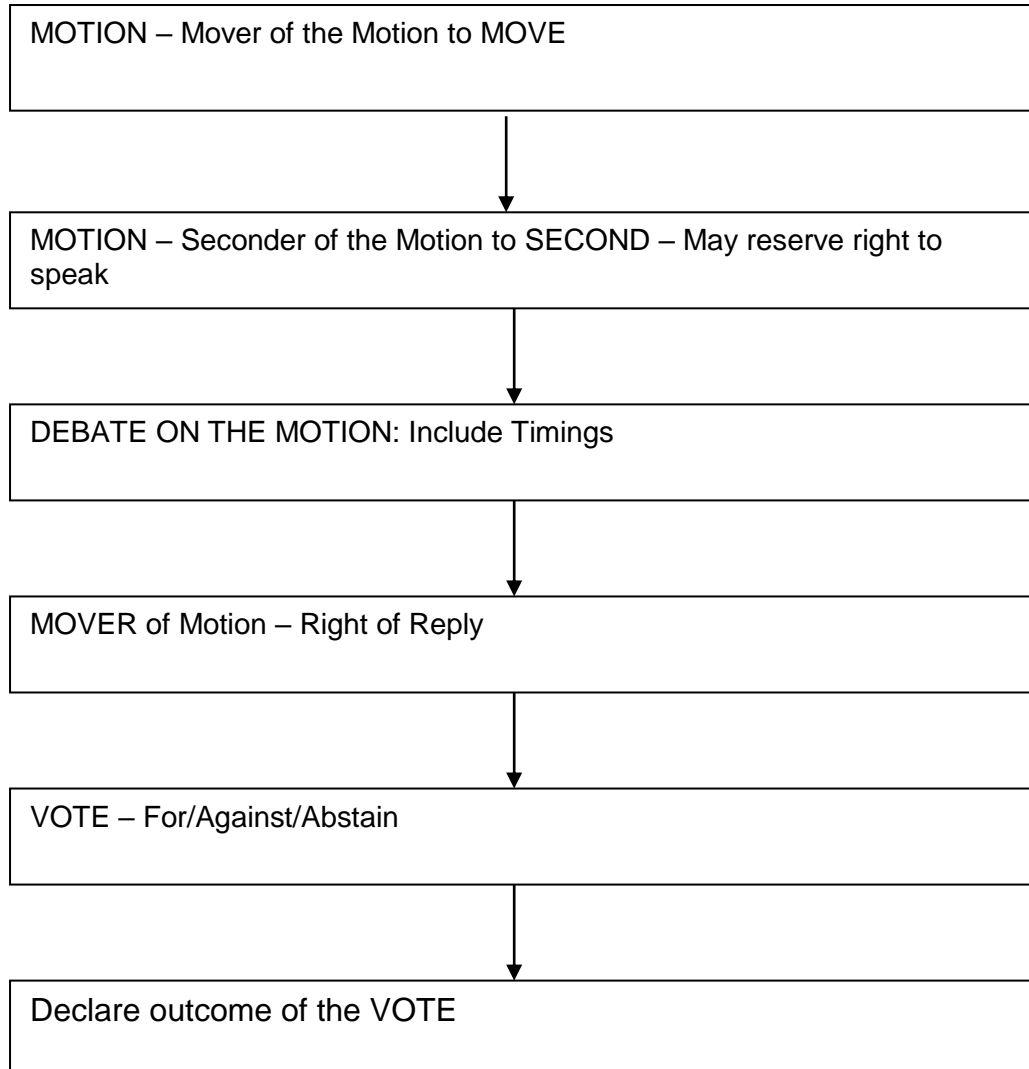
Council is requested to appoint a second Independent Member of the Audit Committee.

NOTE: The meeting of the Council will conclude 3 hours and 30 minutes after the commencement of the meeting.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shelley Kipling', with a stylized, upward-pointing flourish at the end.

**Shelley Kipling
Chief Executive**

PROCEDURE FOR NOTICE OF MOTIONS **NO AMENDMENT**

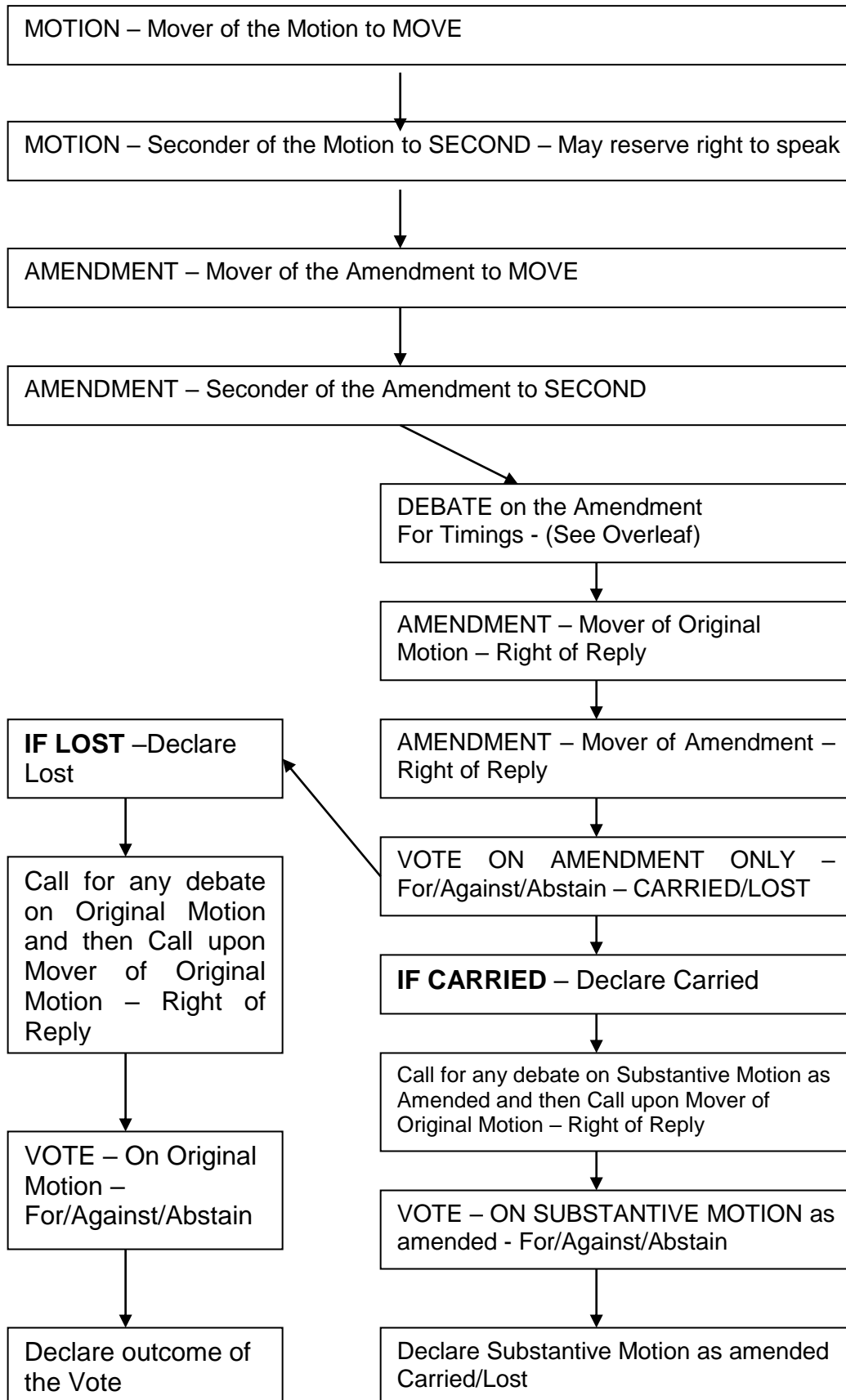


RULE ON TIMINGS

(a) No Member shall speak longer than four minutes on any **Motion or Amendment**, or by way of question, observation or reply, unless by consent of the Members of the Council present, he/she is allowed an extension, in which case only one extension of 30 seconds shall be allowed.

(b) A Member replying to more than one question will have up to six minutes to reply to each question with an extension of 30 seconds

WITH AMENDMENT



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Report to COUNCIL – 12th November 2025



Portfolio Report

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Arooj Shah, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Growth.

This report provides an update on the main activity since the last Council meeting relating to portfolio responsibilities.

Pride in Place:

I'm delighted to update Council on a new government-funded programme will provide significant investment for local community-led projects in Oldham. We have secured a £1.5 million Pride in Place Impact Fund grant to improve community spaces and high streets, with the Alt neighbourhood also receiving a £20 million investment for long-term neighbourhood transformation over the next decade.

This new programme builds on the previous Long-Term Plan for Towns initiative which aimed to give local residents a stronger voice on identifying and delivering projects that strengthen communities. The ultimate goal of this refreshed programme of activity is to create places that residents are proud to live in, support local businesses, make areas more vibrant and welcoming, and give communities more control over the future of their neighborhoods.

Oldham Town Centre Shop Front Grants:

We are continuing to work with businesses on the shop front grant scheme where businesses can apply for up to £10,000 to improve their facade. Already there has been a great response from businesses in the eligible areas including both Yorkshire and Union Streets. We are keen to see the improvements happening as soon as possible to complement all the other work that is taking place in the town centre so we hope to have the first tranche of offer letters out to businesses as soon as possible.

Housing Delivery:

The positive progress I updated on housing delivery last month has continued, with 123 new affordable homes delivered in the first half of this year. I was also pleased to see the planning application coming in from Vistry and First Choice Homes Oldham for the Southlink development last month, hot on the heels of the application from Rowland Homes on the former South Chadderton School site that was submitted in August. The two developments will provide 297 new homes, including 207 affordable homes, on two vacant council-owned sites.

Creating a Better Place:

Building on the successes to date, Cabinet recently approved using the Community Regeneration Fund to purchase and subsequently demolish a vacant property on Yorkshire Street, which has struggled to attract any commercial interest in over 2 years. This has been an aspiration for some time as part of the wider masterplan for the area, and will significantly uplift the cultural area surrounding the Coliseum Theatre.

The new home for Oldham Archives was officially opened by the Mayor, Cllr Eddie Moores, on Saturday 27th September alongside activities for the well-attended Nostalgic Oldham event. Visitors were welcomed into the archive space for the first time to take a look at some of the items in the collection, see maps, photos, listen to some of our history, and had the chance for a behind-the-scenes tour. It is the first time all the collections will be on site together in one area, making them much more accessible for our residents and visitors.

Work has commenced on the latest phase of the Town Centre Park. The second phase, on the eastern edge of the park, has now started on site to provide further green space for residents and visitors to enjoy alongside the greening of the Town Centre as part of our Accessible Oldham scheme making it easier, safer and more enjoyable to travel around the town centre which

includes Snipe Gardens completed earlier this year creating a much improved and stronger connection between the bus station and the Town Centre.

As part of the ongoing development at Hollinwood Junction a start on site has commenced for the new 192,000sq ft Industrial units that will create hundreds of jobs. A new LIDL store is currently under construction, linking in with our Get Oldham working programme, and is expected to be open prior to Christmas. In addition, the site will be key to delivering much needed new homes.

Building on the success to date of Broadway Green in creating new homes and hundreds of new jobs we have now commenced the latest phase of housing with 102 affordable homes. The linear park which borders the development is programmed for completion in December 25.

As part of our ongoing commitment to retain, invest and ensure the future sustainability of historic buildings for local communities, the town and future generations a launch event was held at Foxdenton hall to mark the start of the initial phase of work to restore the 200 year old building that has been closed to the public for 14 years. The Chadderton Together group has secured a National Lottery Heritage Fund grant of £228,000 from The National Lottery Heritage Fund is matched with £119,000 from the Council to create an initial plan for the renovation that we hope will lead to a capital grant to complete the restoration of this much-loved building. This is building on the preservation of other historic buildings including Failsworth Town Hall, Royton Town Hall and the Old Library now renamed the J R Clynes building.

Strategy, Policy, and Performance:

This month I was proud to speak at the Greater Manchester launch of National Living Wage Week, which Oldham was chosen to host. It was a fantastic opportunity to demonstrate our leadership on fair employment and the difference a real Living Wage makes to residents and local businesses. I shared Oldham's commitment to tackling in-work poverty and building an economy that works for everyone and I was encouraged by the dedicated support from employers and regional partners in the room.

Oldham is also a key partner in Manchester Metropolitan University's Place-based Circular Society Innovations programme – a major international initiative exploring how towns and cities can lead the transition to a greener, fairer circular economy. At the recent keynote event in Manchester, Northern Roots was highlighted as an example of how circular approaches can create local jobs, reduce waste, and strengthen communities. This partnership is helping cement Oldham's reputation as a borough at the forefront of social and environmental innovation – something I am incredibly proud of.

Recommendations: Council is requested to note the report.

Present: Councillor Shah (in the Chair)
Councillors M Ali, Brownridge, Dean, Goodwin, Mushtaq and Taylor

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor F. Hussain and Councillor Jabbar.

2 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of urgent business received.

3 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received.

4 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

A question was received from Mr Matthew Broadbent, a resident of the Borough:

With regard to the masterplan for Beal Valley and Broadbent Moss that is currently under consultation, please can you tell me if the council has to formally adopt it and, if so, briefly outline the process. If it is to be formally adopted, please can you tell me which body is responsible for this i.e. Planning Committee/Cabinet/Full Council?

Councillor Taylor, Statutory Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods responded:

Policies JPA12 and JPA14 in Places for Everyone cover the allocation of the Beal Valley and Broadbent Moss sites for development. Both policies stipulate that development on the sites are required to “Be in accordance with a comprehensive masterplan and design code as agreed by the local planning authority”. As such, it is necessary for a masterplan and design code to be prepared and for the council to agree them, in order for the requirement to be met and to have a masterplan and design code against which planning applications in the sites can be assessed.

The PfE requirement does not need the council to formally adopt the masterplan and design code, merely to agree that they are an acceptable basis for the proposed developments. As a result, once a final masterplan and design code has been submitted to the council by the developer consortium for Beal Valley and Broadbent Moss, this will be considered by Cabinet for agreement.

5 **MINUTES**

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 16th June 2025, be approved as a correct record.

6 **REVENUE MONITOR AND CAPITAL INVESTMENT
PROGRAMME 2024/25 - OUTTURN REPORT**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Finance which provided Members with an overview of the Council's revenue budget position for 2024/25, which reports an overspend of £10.155m. The report also highlighted the main movements from the previous forecast for the year, which was previously reported to the Cabinet on 24th March 2025.



Cabinet was advised that the revenue overspend position for the financial year 2024/25 was £10.155m, which represented an improvement of £4.442m from the position previously reported to Cabinet. This financial monitoring report followed on from the previously reported positions and detailed the year end position. This outturn position thus reflected the significant financial pressures being faced by the Council particularly for social care services and homelessness.

An update on the 2024/25 outturn position was detailed within Annex 1, to the report. Information on the year end position of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) was also included within the report.

In addition, Cabinet was informed that the report outlined the year end capital spending position for 2024/25 for approved schemes. The revised capital programme budget for 2024/25 was £87.460m, with actual expenditure to 31st March 2025 at £81.791m.

Options/Alternatives considered:

The Director of Finance advised that the Options that Cabinet might consider in relation to the contents of this report were:

- a. To agree the revenue and capital positions presented in the report and agree the use of Reserves to balance the revenue budget.
- b. To note the outturn position for the Dedicated Schools Grant and the Housing Revenue Account.
- c. To propose an alternative to balance the revenue budget for 2024/25.

The Preferred Options were a. and b. detailed above.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet:

1. Notes the 2024/25 outturn position as £10.155m overspend for the year.
2. Approves the use of Reserves to finance the overspend position.
3. Notes the outturn position for the Dedicated Schools Grant and the forecast for 2025/26.
4. Notes the 2024/25 outturn position for the Housing Revenue Account.
5. Notes the capital spending position for 2024/25 as at 31 March 2025.

The Cabinet received a report of the Director of Public Health, which informed Cabinet that implementing the Live Well scheme would present an opportunity to accelerate and intensify work

already started in Oldham to shift towards a preventative approach whereby residents will get the support they need, in the way they need it, in their own communities.



The Cabinet's membership was reminded that, launched in May 2024, Live Well was Greater Manchester's (GM) movement for community-led health and wellbeing. It aimed to support healthier, happier and fairer communities by growing opportunities for everyone to Live Well, providing everyday support in neighbourhoods. Oldham has been using a similar approach for some time, through building and supporting a strong Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) sector, developing a place-based approach to public services and a range of activities intended to support strong, resilient communities. The submitted report outlined an Oldham Live Well approach and the governance to implement this locally, utilising the implementation funding from Greater Manchester, which represented a total of £844,000.

Options/Alternatives considered:

Option 1 – To accept the implementation funding and conditions to roll out Live Well in Oldham. This option was preferable as it enabled Oldham to build upon the range of work developed over previous years (as outlined at Section 2 of the submitted report) and the Council's strong desire to move towards a system with prevention and community empowerment at its heart. The funding made available will enable both investment in the VCFSE sector and consolidate the authority's district approach through the strengthening of key hubs and spaces. This would, it was hoped, broaden the approach, whereby the Borough's Neighbourhood teams can collaborate to support residents. This would also align with the Council's wider reform agenda. A key disadvantage to accepting the Live Well funding and its requirements was that currently this funding was non-recurrently available for one financial year only. Future non-recurrent or recurrent investment was unclear and it was predicated on Localities and Greater Manchester demonstrating the value proposition for Live Well.

Option 2 – To decline the implementation funding that has been made available to roll out Live Well in Oldham. The advantage to this option would be reducing the demands on council capacity to enact the initiative, however, the disadvantages, it was felt, far outweighed this advantage. Live Well was a flagship approach for Greater Manchester which had funding attached to it. Oldham could be reputationally damaged should it decline this opportunity to test approaches to community led wellbeing. Option 1 was the preferred Option.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet:

1. Accept the Live Well Implementation Funding, including the conditions of funding, outlined in the submitted report and agrees that the grant funding is allocated to Public Health to enact.
2. Delegates authority for the execution of all decisions regarding utilisation of the funding from the Live Well

Implementation Fund to the Director of Public Health, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing.

3. Delegates authority to the Director of Public Health, in conjunction with the Director of Legal Services and the Director of Finance, or their nominees, to vary existing contracts (and any associated collaborative commissioning agreements), issue grant agreements or award contracts stemming from a compliant procurement process.
4. Delegates authority to the Director of Legal Services, or his nominee, to carry out all necessary legal formalities linked to the actions delegated to the Director of Public Health, including the execution of contracts.
5. Agrees to the formation of the Live Well Partnership Board to support the implementation of a Live Well approach in Oldham, to accelerate and intensify the existing focus on supporting residents in our communities in partnership with a resilient VCFSE sector.

8

INFANT FEEDING PEER SUPPORT SERVICE – NEW CONTRACT

The Cabinet received a report of the Director of Public Health that sought to ensure that Oldham residents had access to comprehensive infant feeding support, including a dedicated Infant Feeding Peer Support Service from 1st April 2026.

Breastfeeding was an important public health priority to provide every child with the best possible start in life and provides short and long-term health benefits for both the mother and baby. Whilst breastfeeding rates are improving in Oldham, they remained significantly below national rates. It was important that there would be provision for a community Infant Feeding Peer Support Service.

The current contract for the current Infant Feeding Peer Support Service is due to expire on 31st March 2026, currently with no further options to extend. Therefore, the Director of Public Health was seeking permission to continue to maintain and build on the successful partnership with Tameside Council to commission a high-quality Infant Feeding Peer Support service that meets the needs of local residents. Tameside will be the lead commissioner and there would, if approved, be a new contract which was to commence on 1st April 2026 for a period of three years, with an option to extend for up to two further years.

It was intended that an additional report be submitted for approval by the Director of Public Health, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health, following completion of the tender process. The budget was to be reviewed and based on the current service model for 2025 to 2026.

Options/alternatives considered:

The Options and alternatives were detailed in the Confidential 'Part B' report that was to be considered at agenda item 13.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet will consider the confidential recommendations, detailed in the report, at agenda item 13.

9

GREATER MANCHESTER JOINT MINERALS AND WASTE PLAN: DECISION MAKING PROCESS

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director of Place/Deputy Chief Executive that sought approval from Members to delegate to the AGMA Executive Board the formulation and preparation of a joint development plan document with the other nine Greater Manchester councils (Bolton Bury, Manchester, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan), to cover planning for minerals and waste across Greater Manchester insofar as such matters were executive functions.

The leaders of the Greater Manchester authorities, at the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) Executive Board meeting on 28th March 2025, had agreed to the production of a statutory Greater Manchester Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (GMJMWP). The submitted report considered the necessary steps required in relation to seeking approval from all the Greater Manchester districts to commence preparation and to delegate its preparation to the AGMA Executive Board.

The existing Greater Manchester Minerals and Waste Plans was required to be updated in full because they were currently out of date having previously been adopted over a decade ago. Their replacement, with a single, joint minerals and waste plan would ensure efficient compliance with national planning policies.

Options/Alternatives considered:

Option 1: Following the approval in principle of the above recommendation by Council to the making of a joint development plan document with the other 9 Greater Manchester councils (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan), to cover planning for minerals and waste across Greater Manchester, Cabinet is recommended to:

Delegate to AGMA Executive Board the formulating and preparing of the joint development plan document to cover planning for minerals and waste across Greater Manchester insofar as such matters are executive functions.

This option is the most efficient option and will ensure an up-to-date minerals and waste plan. There are no disadvantages to this option.

Option 2: To not delegate to the AGMA Executive Board, the formulating and preparing of the joint development plan document to cover planning for minerals and waste across Greater Manchester insofar as such matters are executive functions. This will mean that the minerals and waste plan would be unable to be delegated to the AGMA Executive Board by all

ten districts, which will put at risk the timely progression of the minerals and waste plan.

Option 1 was the preferred Option.

The Cabinet was informed that as this matter was a key decision, the proposal will be considered by the Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board at its meeting on 24th July 2025, which was after this Cabinet meeting. It was therefore proposed that the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, be granted delegated authority to take the final decision on the delegation, having considered any comments made thereon by the Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board on 24th July 2025.

Resolved:

That following the approval in principle by Council to the making of a joint development plan document with the other nine Greater Manchester councils (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan), to cover planning for minerals and waste across Greater Manchester, the Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Subject to recommendation 3 below, delegate to AGMA Executive Board the formulating and preparing of the joint development plan document to cover planning for minerals and waste across Greater Manchester insofar as such matters are executive functions.
2. Note that the following **are the sole responsibility of the Council:**
 - a) Responsibility for giving of instructions to the Cabinet to reconsider the draft plan submitted by the Cabinet for the authority's consideration.
 - b) The amendment of the draft joint development plan document submitted by the Cabinet for the Council's consideration.
 - c) The approval of the joint development plan document for the purposes of submission to the Secretary of State for independent examination.
 - d) The adoption of the joint development plan document.
3. Note that the item will be exempt from call-in, under Rule 14 of the Constitution, as the matter will be considered by the Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board on 24th July 2025.
4. Grant delegated authority to the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods to take the final decision on the delegation to AGMA Executive Board, having considered any comments made by the Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board on 24th July.

10

OPEN SPACE INTERIM PLANNING POSITION PAPER

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director of Place/Deputy Chief Executive that was seeking approval of the Open Space Interim Planning Position Paper, for publication on the council's website, to assist in the interpretation and implementation of existing planning policies in Oldham's Local Plan.

The Interim Planning Position Paper supported the implementation of policy 23 'Open Spaces and Sports' within Oldham's Local Plan – The Joint Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document, adopted November 2011. This paper superseded the previous 'Open Space Interim Planning Position Paper' published by the council in March 2012.

The submitted report established the council's updated position in relation to open space policy, including the threshold for policy application, the seeking of new and enhanced open space and playing pitches and outdoor sports provision.

It was intended to be read alongside the Local Plan as a whole, but in particular - Local Plan Policy 23 'Open Spaces and Sports'. It should also be read alongside Places for Everyone (PfE) policy JP-P7 'Sport and Recreation'.

The submitted report was also informed by the council's Open Space Study (2022) and the Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy (PPOSS) (2025) as key evidence-based documents.

The Cabinet report provided updated evidence to inform the interpretation and implementation of the policies in Oldham's Local Plan. It was a material consideration and was intended to be used in decision making as appropriate.

The council's approach to updated national guidance and local evidence was to be considered further and to inform policy preparation as part of the Local Plan Review.

Options/alternatives considered:

Option 1 - To approve the Open Space Interim Planning Position Paper for publication on the council's website, to assist in the interpretation and implementation of policy 23 'Open Spaces and Sports' in Oldham's Local Plan.

The advantages to Option 1 were that approving the Open Space Interim Planning Position Paper for publication would ensure effective and consistent decision-making which is in line with local evidence and local and national planning policy. It will provide guidance to developers and planning officers on the interpretation and implementation of open space policy within the current Local Plan.

There were no reported disadvantages to Option 1.

Option 2 - To not approve the Open Space Interim Planning Position Paper for publication on the council's website.

There were no reported advantages to Option 2.

The disadvantages to Option 2 were that not approving the Open Space Interim Planning Position Paper for publication could affect consistent decision-making and adversely impact the effective implementation of local planning policy.

Option 1 was the preferred Option.

The Cabinet was informed that as this matter was a key decision, the proposal will be considered by the Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board at its meeting on 24th July 2025, which was after this Cabinet meeting. It was therefore proposed that the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, be granted delegated authority to take the final decision on the delegation, having considered any comments made thereon by the Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board on 24th July 2025.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet:

1. Approves the Open Space Interim Planning Position Paper for publication on the council's website, to assist in the interpretation and implementation of existing planning policies in Oldham's Local Plan.
2. Notes that the item will be exempt from call-in, under Rule 14 of the Constitution, as the matter will be considered by the Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board on 24th July 2025.
3. Grant delegated authority to the Statutory Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, in consultation with the Executive Director of Place/Deputy Chief Executive, to take the final decision on approval of the Open Space Interim Planning Position Paper for publication, having considered any comments made by the Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board on 24th July 2025.

11

TRANSPORT CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2025/26

The Cabinet received a report of the Director of Environment regarding the Transport Capital Programme 2025/26.

Members were advised, that with the strategic approach for the 5-year City Region sustainable transport settlement (CRSTS) programme approved by the Cabinet in March 2022, which was attached as an Appendix to the submitted report, this report was seeking approval for formal acceptance of the CRSTS funding, as well as the acceptance of the Vision Zero, DfT Additional Funding, DfT Incentive Funding & Integrated Transport Block (ITB), and approval of the programmes recommended for delivery utilising these funds in full, for 2025/26.

Options/alternatives considered:

Option 1 - the proposed programme of schemes which would fully utilise the expected City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS), Vision Zero, DfT Additional Funding, DfT Incentive Funding and Integrated Transport Block (ITB) allocations available for 2025/26 as per the formal grant notifications from GMCA.

Option 2 – the proposed programme of schemes which would fully utilise the expected City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS), Vision Zero, DfT Additional Funding, DfT Incentive Funding and Integrated Transport Block (ITB) allocations available for 2025/26 as per the formal grant notifications from GMCA.

Option 1 was the preferred Option.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet approves:

1. The allocation of CRSTS, Vision Zero, Additional Funding, Incentive Funding and ITB Maintenance funding as shown in the tables below:

Funding

ITB	CRSTS	CRSTS Drawdown	Vision Zero	DfT Additional Funding	DfT Incentive	Total
£ 707,000	£ 3,067,000	£ 2,250,000	£ 200,000	£ 973,000	£ 324,000	£ 7,521,000

Scheme Delivery

£ Drainage	£ Footway	£ Structures	£ Carriageway	£ Road Safety	Total
£ 100,000	£ 400,000	£ 3,905,000	£ 2,209,000	£ 907,000	£ 7,521,000

2. The proposed programme of schemes, which would fully utilise the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) highway maintenance, Vision Zero, DfT Additional Funding, DfT Incentive Funding & Integrated Transport Block (ITB) allocations available for 2025/26 as per the formal grant notification from GMCA.
3. That all tender award decisions are approved by the Authorised Officer (as per Departmental Scheme of Delegation) (Up to £99,999) and where applicable (£100k+) by the Executive Member, in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive, Executive Director of Resources and Director(s) (as relevant). This is necessary to meet delivery timescales.
4. That Cabinet delegate approval and authorisation to the Director of Legal Services, or their nominated representative, to sign and/or affix the Common Seal of the Council to all contracts/agreements/documents and associated or ancillary paperwork to give effect to the recommendations in this report.
5. That any underspend generated as the programme progresses (as detailed in the report's Appendices) be used to deliver additional schemes in priority order (although lower priority schemes may be selected depending on available budget, value for money and type of treatment) until the budget is fully expended in year. This approach to utilising underspend means there is no need to gain further approvals to deliver additional schemes, ensuring they can be delivered as soon as practically possible.

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

That in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from

the meeting, for the following item of business, on the grounds that it contains exempt information under paragraph 3 Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and it would not, on balance, be in the public interest to disclose the reports.

13

INFANT FEEDING PEER SUPPORT SERVICE – NEW CONTRACT

The Cabinet considered the commercially sensitive information in relation to agenda item 8: ‘Infant Feeding Peer Support Service – new contract’.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet approves the continuation of the collaborative commissioning agreement with Tameside Council, by providing approval to:

1. Continue to work with Tameside Council and delegate authority to Tameside Council to commission an Infant Feeding Peer Support Service on our behalf, through STAR Procurement.
2. Delegate authority to the Cabinet Member of Adult Social Care and Health and the Director of Public Health to approve the outcome of the Procurement Tender exercise, on behalf of Oldham.
3. Grant authority to Tameside Council to award the contract to provider with the most advantageous tender following STAR’s procurement exercise.
4. Entering into a new collaboration agreement with Tameside council for the new service to commence on 1st April 2026, for a period of three years with the option to extend for an additional two years.

The meeting started at 6.00pm and ended at 6.15pm

Present: Councillor Shah (in the Chair)
Councillors Brownridge, Dean, Goodwin, F Hussain, Jabbar,
Mushtaq and Taylor

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mohon Ali.

2 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of urgent business received.

3 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received.

4 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions for this Cabinet meeting to consider.

5 **TREASURY MANAGEMENT OUTTURN REPORT 2024/25**

The Cabinet received a report of the Director of Finance which advised Members of the performance of the Treasury Management function for the Council for 2024/25 and provided a comparison of performance against the 2024/25 Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential Indicators.

Members were informed that the Council is required to consider the performance of the Treasury Management function in order to comply with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management (revised 2021). This outturn report provided an update and included the new requirement in the 2021 Code, mandatory from 1st April 2023, of quarterly reporting of the treasury management prudential indicators. This report therefore set out the key Treasury Management issues for Members' information and reviews and outlines:

- An economic update for 2024/25.
- A review and updates of the Council's current treasury management position.
- Council Borrowing.
- Treasury Investment Activity.
- Treasury Performance for 2024/25; and
- Treasury Management Prudential Indicators.

The submitted report had previously been presented to and considered by the Audit Committee at its meeting on 23rd July 2025. The Audit Committee has responsibility for scrutinising all of the Council's treasury management arrangements. All questions and issues raised at the meeting were addressed to the satisfaction of the Committee Members. The Committee was content to recommend the report to Cabinet. After consideration by the Cabinet, the report was due to be presented to the Council on 17th September 2025.

Options/alternatives considered: In order that the Council complies with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management, the Audit Committee, at its meeting on 23rd July 2025, had no option other than to consider and approve the contents of the report. Therefore, no options/alternatives have been presented.

Resolved:

1. That the Cabinet approves the Treasury Management Outturn report for 2024/25 and the Treasury Management activity and commends the report to Council.
2. That the Cabinet approves the proposed increases in the Operational Boundary and Authorised Limit in relation to PFI and Finance Lease debt liabilities as detailed in section 2.5 of the report and accordingly commends it to Council.

The meeting started at 6.00pm and ended at 6.05pm

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CABINET

22/09/2025 at 6.00 pm



Present: Councillor Shah (in the Chair)
Councillors M Ali, Brownridge, Dean, Goodwin, F Hussain,
Jabbar, Mushtaq and Taylor

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence received.

2 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of urgent business received.

3 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received.

4 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Question received from Mr Matthew Broadbent:

In 2024, a photo published in the press showed Cllr Marc Hince wearing an army uniform decorated with Nazi swastikas, which he called a one-off. A later video emerged on social media in which he wears the same uniform, and four others captured him making statements such as, 'Vote right, keep white', calling foreigners 'savages', and joking about Black people shining shoes. Does the Leader retain confidence in Cllr Hince as planning committee chair, per the Seven Principles of Public Life, and why was he chosen over experienced Labour councillors to chair the committee?

Councillor Shah, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Growth replied, that it wasn't her role to explain for the behaviour and actions of members who were not in her group. The actions detailed in Mr Broadbent's question occurred many years before Councillor Hince became an elected Member of Oldham Council. It was suggested that if the questioner had issues with Councillor Hince, in this regard, that he takes them up directly with him.

5 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 21st July 2025 and 8th September 2025, be approved as correct records.

6 **REVENUE MONITOR AND CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2025/26**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Finance that provided members with an update, as at 30th June 2025 (end of Quarter 1 2025/26) of the Council's 2025/26 forecast revenue budget position, the financial forecast of the Dedicated Schools Grant and the Housing Revenue Account (at Annex 1, to the submitted report) alongside the financial position of the capital programme together with the revised capital programme 2025/26 to 2029/30 (at Annex 2, to the submitted report).

In terms of the Revenue Position, the forecast overspend position for 2025/26 at the end of Quarter 1 was estimated to be

£20.822m without any mitigation to bring expenditure down. As this financial monitoring report reflected the financial position at the end of Quarter 1, it could be regarded as an early warning of the potential year end position if no further action was taken to reduce net expenditure. As with previous early period monitoring reports, a cautious approach is generally taken when preparing forecasts. In particular, assumptions were made that vacant positions will be filled successfully, which as the year progresses did not always transpire. The management actions initiated in 2024/25 across all service areas had continued into 2025/26 with further mitigations to reduce the in-year pressure identified. Details were included in Annex 1 to the submitted report. These mitigations had been, or were in the process of being, implemented and it was anticipated that by the financial year end, the current outturn deficit position should have reduced.

Information on the forecast year end position of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) was also outlined in the submitted report.

Regarding the Capital Position, the submitted report outlined the most up to date capital spending position for 2025/26 to 2029/30 for approved schemes. The revised Capital Programme budget for 2025/26 was £116.579m, at the close of Quarter 1. The actual expenditure to 30th June 2025 was £10.553m (9.05% of the forecast outturn).

Options/Alternatives:

- a. To consider the forecast revenue and capital positions presented in the report including proposed changes.
- b. To propose alternative forecasts

The Preferred Option was Option a.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet:

1. Notes the contents of the report.
2. Notes the forecast revenue position, at the end of Quarter 1 2025/26, at £20.822m with mitigations in place to reduce expenditure as detailed at Annex 1, of the submitted report.
3. Notes the forecast positions for the Dedicated Schools Grant and Housing Revenue Account.
4. Approves the revised Capital Programme for 2025/26, including the proposed virements and the forecast for the financial years to 2029/30 as at the end of Quarter 1 as outlined in Annex 2 of the submitted report.

7

ASYLUM DISPERSAL GRANT

The Cabinet considered a report of the Assistant Director of Community Safety and Cohesion, that sought approval to formally accept an £898,800 award from the Home Office in Asylum Dispersal Grant for the period 2025/26.

The Cabinet was advised that the Council had been awarded £898,800.00 in respect of Asylum Dispersal Grant. This was an annual payment for the financial year 1st April 2025 to 31st March

2026 and was paid by the Home Office to local authorities to facilitate Local Authorities to assist with costs of supporting Asylum Seekers.

The Asylum Dispersal Grant is a 'burdens' grant to mitigate the pressure of asylum dispersal and therefore does not have to be spent specifically or solely for expenditure on asylum seekers.

Options/Alternatives considered:

Option 1 - to Accept the grant award of £898,800. This will enable the council to mitigate the pressure on services and provide further funding to increase capacity in services to support Oldham residents.

Option 2 – Do not accept the grant award of £898,800. At a time of increasing pressures on services this would mean that the option to provide additional capacity in services would be lost.

Option 1 was the preferred Option.

Resolved:

That Cabinet agrees to accept the Asylum Grant Dispersal award of £898,800, from the Home Office, that will enable the council to mitigate the pressure on services and provide further funding to increase capacity in services to support all Oldham residents.

8

YOUNG PEOPLE'S SUBSTANCE MISUSE AND SEXUAL HEALTH SERVICE CONTRACT EXTENSION

The Cabinet received a report of the Director of Public Health that was seeking approval to enact an option to extend the contract for the Young People's Sexual Health and Substance Misuse Service by a period of two years, from 1st April 2026 to 31st March 2028, as per the provision made in the original award of the contract for the delivery of the service.

The Cabinet was informed that having a high functioning sexual health and substance misuse offer for young people was an essential component of the range of activity required to achieve better health amongst the general population and to reduce demand on health and social care services. As per Public Health funding conditions and mandated responsibilities, we are required to deliver drug and alcohol services and ensure access to sexual health services for young people.

In January 2021, the contract for the provision of Young People's Sexual Health and Substance Misuse Service was awarded to Early Break (in partnership with HCRG Care Group and The Proud Trust) for an initial period of three years (from 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2024) with an option to extend for a further period of two years plus two years dependent on performance, achievement of key performance indicators (KPIs), continued funding and local need. A contract extension of two years was subsequently approved for 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2026.

The provider had been delivering the service to the requirements, as set out in the specification and meeting the specified performance requirements. They had received positive feedback from service users and professional partners.

It was proposed that the cabinet approve the option to extend the contract with the current provider by a final two years (up until 31st March 2028) to ensure the continuation of high-quality service provision for our local young people. The total value of the proposed two-year extension would be £940,500 (£470, 250 per year).

Options/Alternatives considered:

Option 1: To enact the provision to extend the current contract for a period of 2 years from 1st April 2026 to 31st March 2028 (to complete a total contract length of 7 years).

Option 2: To extend the current contract by three months from 1st April 2026 to 30th June 2026, to allow for a competitive tendering process to be undertaken.

Option 3: To not extend the current contract or conduct a further tendering exercise and no longer have a specific young people's sexual health and substance misuse service but instead combine these elements into existing adults'/all age provision.

Option 1 was the preferred Option.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet agrees to the proposal, detailed in the submitted report, to enact the provision to extend the current contract for a period of two years from 1st April 2026 to 31st March 2028. This would ensure that there was continued delivery of drug and alcohol services and ensure continued access to sexual health services for young people in the borough, in line with the Council's public health funding conditions and mandated responsibilities.

9

FUTURE COMMISSIONING ARRANGEMENTS FOR CARE AT HOME, EXTRA CARE SUPPORT, NIGHT PROVISION SUPPORT SERVICES

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Adult Social Care/DASS which explained that the Council's current contractual arrangements for the delivery of Care at Home, Extra Care and Specialist Care at Home Flexible Purchasing System had commenced on 1st April 2019 and, following the use of a two-year extension option, were due to expire on 31 March 2026.

Care at Home services were a critical component of the Council's statutory duties under the Care Act 2014, providing essential care and support to adults in Oldham with eligible needs. These services enabled some of the borough's most vulnerable residents to live independently and safely in their own homes.

To ensure continuity of service delivery beyond March 2026 and to meet statutory obligations, a full open tender process was to be undertaken in line with the Council's Contract Procedure

Rules. This would allow the Council to establish new contractual arrangements which reflected current and future service requirements, market conditions, and strategic objectives.

Recommissioning the service through a full competitive process would also support improvements in service quality and provide alignment with both local priorities and best practice in home care provision.

Approval was sought from the Cabinet, to proceed with the procurement process for the re-tendering of Care at Home services, with the implementation of new arrangements effective from 1st April 2026. The proposed procurement would follow a compliant route in accordance with both the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and PA23 Regulations and were designed to reflect current and future demand, market capacity, and best practice in domiciliary care.

These commissioning and procurement activities were critical to ensure the Council can continue to meet its statutory duties under the Care Act 2014, delivering timely, person-centred care that promotes independence and supports the wider health and social care system in Oldham.

Options/Alternatives considered:

Option 1: to allow the existing Care at Home contract to cease on 31st March 2026 and continue with current providers delivering Care at Home and related services through ad hoc commissioning without retendering or establishing a new contractual agreement.

Option 2: Proceed with a full procurement exercise for the delivery of Care at Home and associated services in Oldham via an Open Tender process using the Open or Competitive Flexible Procedure model. This will replace the current Flexible Purchasing System (FPS), which expires on 31 March 2026. And Delegate authority to the Director of Adult Social Services and Community Commissioning to award the final contracts following the completion of the procurement process.

Option 3: Allow the existing Care at Home contract to expire on 31 March 2026 without replacement.

Option 2 was the preferred Option.

Resolved:

1. That the Cabinet grants approval for the Director of Adult Social Care Services/DASS, on behalf of the Council, to proceed with a full procurement exercise to establish a new framework agreement for Care at Home and related services, including Care at Home, Extra Care support and night provision (Night Van). This Framework will replace the existing Flexible Purchasing System which is due to expire on 31st March 2026.
2. That the Cabinet delegates authority to approve the service specification to the Director of Adult Social Services and Community Commissioning and to award to successful providers after the tender outcome.
3. That the Cabinet acknowledges it no longer has access to using a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) or Flexible Purchasing

System (FPS) under the current procurement regulations, as these have been replaced by Dynamic Marketplaces which do not permit below-threshold call-offs (under £663,540). On this basis, authority is granted to procure under the PA23 Open or Competitive Flexible Procedure.

4. That the Cabinet grants approval to allow for future changes to service providers, if required, to ensure continuity of provision. Any such changes would remain within the existing financial envelope and would solely involve provider substitution to address service delivery gaps.
5. That the Cabinet grants approval to commence the re-tender for a new Care at Home service to start in April 2026 for a period of four years with the option to extend for one year plus one year, at a cost of approximately £19m a year.

10

INTRODUCTION OF ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION FOR HOUSES OF MULTIPLE OCCUPATION

The Cabinet received a report of the Executive Director of Place/Deputy Chief Executive which set out the current issues and position regarding Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) across the borough. The report was presented in response to recent motions that were presented to full Council, on 16th July 2025, regarding this matter and the report also provided information to Members on the options available to introduce a boroughwide Article 4 Direction, to remove the permitted development right allowing the conversion of dwelling houses (Use Class C3) into HMOs for up to six residents (Use Class C4).

Over the last few years, and more recently through council motions, members have highlighted their concern with the number of Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs) that are currently being introduced across the borough. It is recognised that HMOs provide a much-needed source of housing for various groups in need within the borough, including young people, students, and single person households. However, poorly managed and maintained HMOs, especially where clusters of HMOs arise in one place, can have a detrimental impact on local areas.

To address these concerns, where appropriate, the Council can adopt an Article 4 Direction to remove the permitted development rights that enable a C3 dwelling to be converted to a C4 “small” HMO. This would require such conversions to first apply for planning permission for the change of use. Requiring the submission of a planning application for such proposals will not necessarily reduce the number of C4 HMOs being created, but it does allow for the proper consideration of the effects of a proposed HMO on an area's amenity and local community, before issuing any planning permission and, in doing so, we are able to influence the quality of the HMO through the planning process.

The submitted report:

- Outlined the recent motions presented at council on the 9 April and subsequently 21 July 2025 on the introduction of an Article 4 Direction for HMOs.
- Sets out the legislation regarding Article 4 Directions and the process for implementation.
- Outlines the current position and evidence regarding HMOs across the borough.
- Identifies the options available for the introduction of an Article 4 Direction for HMOs, specifically whether it focuses on specific areas or is boroughwide.

The Cabinet was advised that informed by the evidence presented in the submitted report, the preferred option was to introduce a Non-Immediate Article 4 Direction on Houses of Multiple Occupation that would be implemented on a borough-wide basis. If this was to be agreed, a period of consultation from 29th September to 9th November 2025 for six weeks will take place, after which the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods would then be requested to consider whether to confirm the Direction and bring it into effect on 1st January 2026, having considered all consultation comments received.

Further to the recommendations that were presented in the submitted report, the meeting was advised of an update to recommendation three to read as follows: 'Consider that a further report be brought back to a meeting of the full Council at the first available opportunity to consider the outcome of the consultation, as well as Cabinet, to determine if the Article 4 Direction should be confirmed'.

Options/Alternatives considered:

Option 1 – a Non-Immediate or Immediate Article 4 Direction. The main benefit of an immediate direction is that the Council would gain control over the issue and respond to members and communities' concerns from day one the direction is acknowledged. However, it is considered that:

- Introducing a Non-Immediate Article 4 Direction with a period of six weeks consultation will raise awareness that the implementation of the Direction is forthcoming. This can help to reduce the risk associated with introducing the Direction and minimising potential exposure to compensation claims, as the Council's decision to introduce the Direction and the date on which this is to be confirmed will be in the public domain at the earliest opportunity.
- In addition, the introduction of an Immediate Article 4 Direction has a substantially higher evidence threshold whereby the local planning authority would be required to demonstrate that the development to which the direction relates would be prejudicial to the proper planning of the area or constitute a threat to the amenities of the area. It is not considered that this higher evidence threshold is currently being met anywhere in the borough.

Option 2 - Borough-wide. Evidence showed that, whilst there are several potential clusters beginning to form within and around

inner Oldham, along key transport routes (e.g., the A62 corridor connecting Oldham to Failsworth and Manchester - and Ashton Road) and within and around several district centres, there is still a general spread of HMOs across many areas of the borough, as shown in figure 1 above. We are therefore unable to clearly define those areas disproportionately affected.

Furthermore, whilst our monitoring processes are much improved, we cannot be certain that our evidence has captured all three and four person HMOs in the borough.

In addition, other authorities in Greater Manchester are using Article 4 Directions to have greater control on the location and quality of HMOs. This includes the introduction of borough-wide Article 4 Directions to address concerns of displacement that area-specific Article 4 Directions might cause. In Wigan, for example having introduced an Article 4 Direction in Swinley and central Leigh in 2020, they are finding evidence of a displacement effect where restrictions on HMOs in one area are leading to an increase of HMOs in neighbouring areas of borough. Salford City Council is also increasing the footprint of its current Article 4 Direction on HMOs to cover a much broader area, in response to a similar displacement effect, and Bolton Council has also just been through the process of introducing a borough-wide Article 4 Direction.

Therefore, given concerns around the proliferation of HMOs in various parts of Oldham, and that these are spread across many of areas of the borough, if Cabinet consider that the evidence does justify an Article 4 Direction, it is felt prudent to apply that Direction borough-wide. This will avoid any effects of displacement as witnessed by other GM districts and ensures a consistent approach going forward.

If Cabinet do decide to make an Article 4 Direction for HMOs in Oldham, planning applications for the conversion of C3 dwellings to C4 HMOs will, for the time-being, be considered on the same policy basis that planning applications for HMOs are already considered, having regard to issues such as amenity, character and highway safety. However, through the proposed new Local Plan for Oldham, updated policies will be included that allow a more nuanced approach to planning for HMOs in the borough, particularly geared toward avoiding clusters of HMOs on any given street and ensuring that the space and design standards of rooms in HMOs are adhered to, to avoid over-crowding and poor living conditions.

Option 3 - Area-specific. As evidenced, the data identifies several areas where clusters of HMOs appear to be forming within and around inner Oldham, along key transport routes and within and around several district centres. However, there is still a general spread of HMOs across many areas of the borough, and we are unable to clearly define those areas disproportionately affected. Coupled with concerns of potential displacement, it is considered an area-specific Article 4 Direction would not provide the consistency and control required to ensure that HMOs do not negatively impact on the amenity of our local communities and the character of the borough.

Option 4- No Article 4 Direction. Having no Article 4 Direction in place would mean that small HMOs would continue to come forward as they do at present as permitted development. The

council would therefore have limited control as to how and where these come forward. The council would still have some control over those HMOs that are for 5 to 6 people though as, whilst planning permission is not required for these, they would need to have a HMO Licence.

An Article 4 Direction would not stop HMOs coming forward in the borough, but it would mean that the Council is able to assess the impact of all HMOs on a case-by-case basis, having regard to the individual circumstances and location of the development. A Direction would enable the Council to better manage HMO concentration and prevent the formation of imbalanced communities, as well as reduce any negative impact on local amenity. It would also give residents a voice and a transparent process to ensure that their views are heard. Option 1 was the preferred Option.

Resolved:

1. That the Cabinet consider the evidence presented in this report and the information provided in respect of the options for the introduction of a boroughwide Article 4 Direction for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs).
- 2 That the Cabinet make a Non-Immediate Article 4 Direction to remove permitted development rights for the change of use from Use Class C3 (dwelling houses) to Use Class C4 (small houses in multiple occupation) on a boroughwide basis, in line with the details set out in the report and the Article 4 notice presented at Appendix 5, of the submitted report.
- 3 That the Cabinet consider that a further report be brought back to a meeting of the full Council at the first available opportunity to consider the outcome of the consultation, as well as Cabinet, to determine if the Article 4 Direction should be confirmed.

11

GRANT ACCEPTANCE: CITY REGION SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT SETTLEMENT (CRSTS) - REPRIORITISATION OF CRSTS1 FUNDING

The Cabinet received a report of the Executive Director of Place/Deputy Chief Executive that requested Members to formally accept capital grant funding of £7.3m from CRSTS1 towards the delivery of two Oldham projects:

- Oldham Edge and Higginshaw Active Travel Link
- Oldham Town Centre Sustainable Connectivity Links

The Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) had agreed to reprioritise £190 million of CRSTS1 capital funding to address underspend and delivery challenges. This strategic adjustment supports the Bee Network, active travel and integrated transport goals across the region.

As part of this process, 35 local authority-led schemes have been identified across GMCA, totalling £89.5 million in reprioritised funding. For Oldham, funding has been awarded for the development of Outline and Full Business Cases (OBC/FBC) for:

- Oldham Edge and Higginshaw Active Travel Link

- Oldham Town Centre Sustainable Connectivity Link

These schemes were aligned with Oldham's strategic transport objectives and growth and supported wider GMCA ambitions for sustainable mobility and inclusive growth.



The allocation of funding was intended to enable detailed design work and the commissioning of professional services to meet funding conditions and ensure readiness for future delivery stages. Cabinet approval is sought to integrate this additional resource into the transport capital programme and proceed with procurement and scheme development.

Furthermore, they complemented Oldham's current CRSTS1 schemes, that have already received funding:

- St Mary's Way
- Mumps
- Broadway to Rochdale Canal Link
- Park Road / Kings Road

Options/Alternatives considered:

Option 1 - That the grant offer from the CRSTS1 for the two schemes referred to, in the submitted report, be accepted, that a Grant Funding Agreement be entered into with TfGM for this funding and scheme development and that the additional funding is incorporated into the Transport Capital Programme for 2025/26 onwards and utilised to support council teams and procure external support to deliver the two schemes.

Option 2 – That the grant offer from the CRSTS1 for the two schemes referred to, in the submitted report, be not accepted. If the funding were not accepted and utilised in accordance with the subsequent Grant Funding Agreement and timescales of CRSTS1, the two schemes would not be able to be delivered. Acceptance of the funding now was crucial to allow progress with the design development and business case preparation.

Option 1 was the preferred Option.

Resolved:

1. That the grant offer from the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS), for delivery of an outline/full business case (OBC/FBC) for the schemes at Oldham Edge and Higginshaw Active Travel Link and Oldham Town Centre Sustainable Connectivity Link, be accepted.
2. That approval is granted to enter into a Funding Delivery Agreement with TfGM in relation to the proposed schemes.
3. That the intention to bring the additional resource into the transport capital programme in 2025/26 and complete development of the scheme in the appropriate timescales be noted.
4. That approval is granted to procure and make tender awards relating to the necessary external support required to develop the outline/full business case

(OBC/FBC) and design development, and that this is delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place).

5. That approval is granted to use part of this resource to support Council teams, as required, to progress design options, stakeholder engagement and production of the full business case to secure further capital funding for Oldham.
6. That approval to the Director of Legal Services or his nominated representatives be granted to execute and complete any contractual documents.

12

HIGHWAYS MAINTENANCE FRAMEWORKS CONTRACTS

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director of Place/Deputy Chief Executive which sought approval to establish new frameworks and contracts to deliver and facilitate Highways Maintenance in Oldham. The previous framework (Construction and Highways Works and Services Framework) expired in October 2024.

A review of the delivery of the Construction and Highways Works and Services Framework had identified that new agreements needed to be established.

The proposal, presented to the Cabinet, was to establish a mix of new frameworks and contracts that are required to cover the Council's highways maintenance work requirements. The Council needs to ensure that all procurement activity is compliant with Oldham Council Contract Procedure Rules and the Procurement Act 2023.

Option 1 – To approve the report and allow Oldham Council Procurement to establish new frameworks and contracts to cover all highway maintenance delivery. This will ensure that delivery complies with Oldham Council Contract Procedure Rules and the Procurement Act 2023, whilst also delivering the best value for money.

Option 2 – Not to approve the report, which is not considered viable, as the consequence of this will leave the Council in breach of Oldham Council Contract Procedure Rules, unless each scheme is individually quoted or tendered for, which is considered an inefficient procurement method, and would not provide best value.

Option 1 is the preferred Option.

Resolved:

That Cabinet approval is given to establish new frameworks and contracts, as outlined in Option 1 (paragraph 3.1 of the submitted report) Option 1, thereby allowing Oldham Council's Procurement Service to establish new frameworks and contracts to cover all highway maintenance delivery, which will ensure that delivery complies with Oldham Council Contract Procedure Rules and the Procurement Act 2023, whilst also delivering the best value for money.

The meeting started at 6.00pm and ended at 6.18pm

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CABINET

20/10/2025 at 6.00 pm



Present: Councillor Shah (in the Chair)
Councillors Brownridge, Dean, Goodwin, Jabbar and Taylor

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mohon Ali, Fida Hussain and Mushtaq.

2 **URGENT BUSINESS**

The Chair advised that there was one item of urgent business (Pride in Place Impact Fund Grant Acceptance), which would be considered at item 13. The grounds for urgency being that a formal decision to accept the grant funding, referred to in the submitted report, was required prior to the next scheduled Cabinet meeting on 17th November.

The Chair added that agenda items 12 (and the associated confidential appendices at item 18) and 13, were exempt from the call-in process by virtue of Rule 14 of the Constitution, following consultation with the Chair of Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board.

3 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received.

4 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions for this meeting of the Cabinet to consider.

5 **MINUTES**

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 22nd September 2025, be approved as a correct record.

6 **REVENUE MONITOR AND CAPITAL INVESTMENT
PROGRAMME 2025/26 - MONTH 5**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Finance that provided members with an update, as at 31st August 2025 (Month 5), of the Council's 2025/26 forecast revenue budget position (detailed at Annex 1 to the report) alongside the financial position of the capital programme together with the revised capital programme 2025/26 to 2029/30 (detailed at Annex 2 to the report).

The forecast adverse position for 2025/26 at the end of Month 5 was estimated to be £23.209m (£20.822m at the end of Quarter 1 – 30th June 2025). The details within the revenue monitoring report for Month 5 followed on from the Quarter 1 report previously presented and outlined the general direction of travel for this financial year, highlighting any significant areas of concern which may not just impact on the current year, but also when preparing future budgets.

A forecast adverse position based on the Month 5 revenue controllable budget was £23.209m which was an unfavourable movement of £2.387m from the position previously reported. The increasing need for support of the Council's services from residents and businesses, the complexity of the support needed, and inflationary costs continue to put pressure on service budgets and is demonstrated by the Month 5 forecast outturn position. These pressures, in the main were driven by escalating costs in essential statutory services supporting the most vulnerable residents, reflecting the broader challenges the Council and numerous Councils across the country are facing. This is particularly acute in statutory and heavily inspected services where there is little flexibility to mitigate rising costs, for example increasing pressures on social care budgets due to the support needs of vulnerable children and complexity in the needs of adult requiring support.

There was also an increasing need to support children with Special Educational Needs (SEND) and whilst significant work has been done in the last 12 months, homelessness presentations and use of temporary accommodation is still of concern given the numbers accessing this service.

Since the last report was presented to the Cabinet, the Executive Team had implemented enhanced controls on expenditure with future revenue monitoring reports expected to show the positive impacts of these management actions. Details on these controls were included in Annex 1 to the submitted report. Given, the in-year financial position of the Council, the level of reserves available and the budgetary gaps already within the MTFS, the outcome of the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2026/27 and future years will have a significant influence on the financial sustainability of the Council and the Council's ability to set a balanced budget over the short term. The budget pressures the Council has faced in recent years cannot continue to be mitigated without significant action both to reduce projected spend in year and to reduce costs over years to come. Further details of mitigations underway were included at Annex 1 to the submitted report.

The Director of Finance's report outlined the most up to date capital spending position for 2025/26 to 2029/30 for approved schemes. The revised Capital Programme budget for 2025/26 is £122.222m at the close of Month 5. Actual expenditure to 31st August 2025 was £20.042m (16.4% of the forecast outturn).

Options/alternatives considered:

Options/Alternatives 1 was to agree the recommendations detailed in the submitted report.

Option 2 to not agree the recommendations and to propose alternative forecasts.

Option 1 was the preferred Option.

Resolved:

1. That the Cabinet notes the contents of the report.

2. That the Cabinet notes the forecast revenue position at the end of Month 5 at £23.209m with mitigations in place to reduce expenditure as detailed at Annex 1, to the submitted report.
3. That the Cabinet approves the revised Capital Programme for 2025/26 including the proposed virements and notes the forecast for the financial years to 2029/30 as at the end of Month 5 as outlined in Annex 2, to the submitted report.

7

SITES OF BIOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE UPDATE

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director of Place (Deputy Chief Executive) which sought the designation of a new Site of Biological Importance (SBI) and to adopt changes which had occurred to other SBI boundaries within the borough.

Appendix 1, of the submitted report, provided a map of the new SBI (Ladcastle Heath) and maps of the other SBI boundary changes (in respect of Medlock Headwater and Strinesdale, Moorgate Quarry and Armit Road Lodge). These changes were outlined at Appendices 2 and 3, to the report, alongside details of the other SBIs reviewed.

The Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) periodically survey SBI's across Greater Manchester as part of a continuous process and notifies the council when there are changes that need to be made to the designations. The submitted report outlined changes to SBIs from site surveys carried out by GMEU in 2022 (received 2025).

The report therefore seeks to designate a new Site of Biological Importance (SBI) – Ladcastle Heath and to adopt changes which have occurred to other SBI boundaries within the borough, as outlined in Appendices 1, 2 and 3.

Options/Alternatives considered:

Option 1 - To designate a new Site of Biological Importance (SBI) – Ladcastle Heath and to adopt changes which have occurred to other SBI boundaries within the borough, as outlined in Appendix 1, 2 and 3. The advantage of this option is that the SBI will be subject to the principles set out in National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) to avoid, mitigate and as a last resort compensate any harm. It will also contribute to the GM Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) Target 1: To increase the amount of land designated for nature by 5,000ha by 2035, growing this from 11% to 15% of the city-region. There are no disadvantages to this option.

Option 2 – To not designate a new Site of Biological Importance (SBI) – Ladcastle Heath and to not adopt changes which have occurred to other SBI boundaries within the borough, as outlined in Appendix 1, 2 and 3. The disadvantage is that the new SBI and boundary additions will not have been designated and therefore the full extent of the SBI's may not be given due consideration under NPPF, Places for Everyone (PfE) and the Local Plan. This option would not contribute to the LNRS Target 1: To increase the amount of land designated for nature by

5,000ha by 2035, growing this from 11% to 15% of the city-region. There are no advantages to this option.
Option 1 is the preferred option.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet agrees to

1. To designate a new Site of Biological Importance (SBI) – Ladcastle Heath and adopt changes which have occurred to other SBI boundaries within the borough, as outlined in Appendix 1, 2 and 3; and to
2. Note the District Synopsis and District Fact Sheet.

8

TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION PROCUREMENT EXERCISES - NIGHTLY-PAID AND EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Communities which advised that the Council has a statutory duty to house homeless households under the Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. Where prevention was not possible, and permanent housing couldn't be found in sufficient time, the Council was obliged to provide temporary accommodation, until households could be accommodated permanently.

The current arrangements in relation to key elements of temporary accommodation provision in Oldham were due to expire in the coming year, and required re-procuring, to ensure that the Council had adequate access to accommodation for homeless households.

Options/Alternatives considered:

Option 1: That a robust, transparent procurement and commissioning process is undertaken to procure the following:

- a. A new framework for nightly-paid temporary accommodation
 - b. The provision of short-term emergency provision for temporary accommodation, via a dynamic market notice.
- That framework and contract-award decision making responsibilities are delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), ensuring that the exercise and contract award are carried out in a timely fashion, in order to ensure that we have sufficient provision in place to meet our obligations around homelessness.

Option 2: That some or all of the above procurement exercises are not agreed. This would mean that the Council would have less access to appropriate short-term and temporary accommodation and may struggle to meet our statutory obligations.

Option 1 was the preferred Option.

Resolved that:

1. That a robust, transparent procurement and commissioning process is undertaken to procure the following:
 - a. A new framework for nightly-paid temporary accommodation

- b. The provision of short-term emergency provision for temporary accommodation, via a dynamic market notice
2. That framework and contract-award decision making responsibilities are delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place).

9

EXTEND THE CONTRACT TERM FOR THE DELIVERY OF ACCOMMODATION BASED SERVICES

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Neighbourhoods which sought the extension of the contract term of each of the three contracts referenced in the confidential report at item 15, in accordance with the terms and conditions of each contract for the period 1st April 2026 to 31st March 2027

The Council is party to three separate contracts for the delivery of Accommodation Based Services. The initial term of each contract ended on 31st March 2025, and was subsequently extended to 31st March 2026, at the same time as responsibility and budget for these contracts passed from Adult Social Care to Housing needs. There was provision within each contract to extend the term for a further 12 months. The report therefore proposed enacting that extension.

Options/alternatives considered:

These are detailed in the confidential report, to be considered at item 15.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet will consider the confidential recommendations, detailed in the report, at agenda item 15.

10

APPROVAL OF GRANT FUNDING AGREEMENT WITH GMCA FOR THE PROVISION OF COMMUNITY ACCOMMODATION SERVICE

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Communities that sought approval to enter into a grant agreement with Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) to fund the continued delivery of the Community Accommodation Service Tier 3 2025/27 scheme. The scheme was a type of temporary accommodation for prison leavers who are open to His Majesty's Probation Service and would not otherwise be owed a statutory accommodation duty by a Local Authority. The initial 12 months' pilot which successfully launched across the region in July 2021 ensured subsequent multi-year grant funding to enable Greater Manchester Authorities to create a unique local authority led model for temporarily accommodating prison leavers.

Options/alternatives considered:

These are detailed in the confidential report, to be considered at item 16.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet will consider the confidential recommendations, detailed in the report, at agenda item 16.

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Public Health which sought to confirm the Council's position to finalise the move to an agency model for the Borough's leisure services delivery model, and approving the necessary contractual modifications, including an updated Deed of Variation with Oldham Active (Oldham Community Leisure)

Options/alternatives considered:

These are detailed in the confidential report, to be considered at item 17.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet will consider the confidential recommendations, detailed in the report, at agenda item 17.

PROPERTY ACQUISITION - OLDHAM TOWN CENTRE

The Cabinet considered a report that sought approval for the acquisition and demolition of a property on Yorkshire Street, Oldham to support the wider regeneration of the area and the continued creation of a cultural quarter in this part of the town centre. Details of the property were noted in part B of this report (item 18), while legal, commercial and financial negotiations were in flight. The details of the acquisition were soon to be made public domain but could not be shared publicly at the present time.

Options/alternatives considered:

These are detailed in the confidential report, to be considered at item 18.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet will consider the confidential recommendations, detailed in the report, at agenda item 18.

PRIDE IN PLACE IMPACT FUND GRANT ACCEPTANCE

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director of Place/Deputy Chief Executive which sought approval and acceptance of £1,500,000 Pride in Place Impact Fund capital grant allocation, from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) in September 2025 as part of the 2025 Spending Review.

Oldham had been allocated £1,500,000 capital from the Pride in Place Impact Fund from MHCLG to be spent over 2025/26 and 2026/27. The Pride in Place Impact Fund will cover the following objectives:

- a. Community spaces: creating, extending, improving or refurbishing existing community facilities and enabling community organisations to take control or ownership of underused but valued local assets.
- b. Public spaces: enhancing the physical environment in public spaces - examples of initiatives include new or improved green

spaces or public squares, improved outdoor play, sports and leisure spaces, installing street furniture, public art or wayfinding.

c. High street and town centre revitalisation: making these areas more attractive and welcoming places where people congregate and which encourage economic activity. Examples of initiatives that could be funded are shop frontage improvements, adaptations that bring premises back into use, streetscape improvements, public art, trails and wayfinding, and creating or improving the infrastructure for regular markets.

Resolved:

1. That the Cabinet approves the acceptance of the £1,500,000 capital Pride in Place Impact Fund from MHCLG and undertaken the following objectives:
 - A. Community spaces: creating, extending, improving or refurbishing existing community facilities and enabling community organisations to take control or ownership of underused but valued local assets.
 - B. Public spaces: enhancing the physical environment in public spaces - examples of initiatives include new or improved green spaces or public squares, improved outdoor play, sports and leisure spaces, installing street furniture, public art or wayfinding.
 - C. High street and town centre revitalisation: making these areas more attractive and welcoming places where people congregate and which encourage economic activity. Examples of initiatives that could be funded are shop frontage improvements, adaptations that bring premises back into use, streetscape improvements, public art, trails and wayfinding, and creating or improving the infrastructure for regular markets.
2. That the Cabinet notes that MHCLG has issued a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), which has been reviewed by the Council 's financial services.
3. That the Cabinet agrees to delegate authority to the Executive Director of Place (Deputy Chief Executive) to agree the terms of the MoU issued by MHCLG and any funding agreement in respect of the grant award in consultation with the Directors of Finance and Legal Services and approve appointments of professional teams and contract award in respect of the agreed budget.
4. That the Cabinet agrees to delegate authority to Director of Finance, or Chief Executive, to finalise and enter into the MoU issued by MHCLG and any funding agreement in respect of the grant award subject to the completion of any necessary due diligence on subsidy control compliance and authority to agree and complete any project change requests under the MOU and/or funding agreement.
5. That the Cabinet agrees to delegate authority to the Director of Legal Services or their nominee to formalise any necessary legal requirements including signing

and/or sealing any documentation referred to and/or required to give effect to the recommendations and/or delegations in this report and authority to approve the appointment of external legal advisers if required to protect the Council's interests and give effect to the recommendations in this report.

6. That the Cabinet agrees to delegate authority to the Director of Economy or their nominated representative to agree monitoring and evaluation of defined outputs and negotiations thereupon as required over the grant delivery period of 2025/26 and 2026/27.
7. That the Cabinet notes and endorses that the internal governance and administration for the MHCLG grant will be performed via the Creating a Better Place Programme Board (CaPB) structures.
8. That the Cabinet notes that the Chair of the Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board, had agreed for this item to be considered at this meeting on grounds of urgency, namely due to the need to make a decision to accept the grant funding before the next scheduled meeting of the Cabinet on 17th November 2025 and that he has exempted this item from call-in by virtue of Rule 14 of the Constitution.

14

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

That in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting, for the following four items of business, on the grounds that they contain exempt information under paragraph 3 Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and it would not, on balance, be in the public interest to disclose the reports.

15

EXTEND THE CONTRACT TERM FOR DELIVERY OF ACCOMMODATION BASED SERVICES

The Cabinet considered the commercially sensitive information in relation to agenda item 9 'Extend the Contract Term for Delivery of Accommodation Based Services'.

Resolved:

1. That Cabinet approves a one-year extension to the contract term in respect of those contracts referenced in the submitted report, each of which relates to the delivery of Accommodation Based Services, noting that this is within the delegated authority of the Director of Adult Social Services in consultation with the Lead Member for Adult Health and Social Care
2. That Cabinet approves the transfer of delegated authority relating to these contracts from the Director of Adult Social Services (in consultation with the Lead Member for Adult Health and Social Care) to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods. This is in recognition of the previous transfer of these contracts from Adult Social Care to Housing Needs.

16

APPROVAL OF GRANT FUNDING AGREEMENT WITH

GMCA FOR THE PROVISION OF COMMUNITY ACCOMMODATION SERVICE



The Cabinet considered the commercially sensitive information in relation to agenda item 10 'Approval of Grant Funding Agreement with GMCA for the provision of Community Accommodation Service.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet authorises Oldham Borough Council to agree and enter into a grant agreement with Greater Manchester Combined Authority for the continued delivery of the service captured in the grant agreement namely CAS-3, as outlined in the submitted report.

17

OLDHAM ACTIVE - AGENCY MODEL

The Cabinet considered the commercially sensitive information in relation to agenda item 11 'Oldham Active – Agency Model'.

Resolved:

1. That the Cabinet approves the work and transition to an agency model for the delivery of leisure services in Oldham.
2. That the Cabinet authorises officers to finalise and enters into a Deed of Variation with Oldham Active to reflect the agency model.
3. That the Cabinet delegates authority to the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure in consultation with the Director of Public Health, the Director of Finance, and the Director of Legal to approve and execute the Deed of Variation.
4. That the Cabinet notes that the new agency model will allow the Council and OCL to explore long term options for the delivery of leisure services in the borough such as Teckal/LATCo company model when the current contract ends (March 2028 or earlier).

18

PROPERTY ACQUISITION - OLDHAM TOWN CENTRE

The Cabinet considered the commercially sensitive information in relation to agenda item 12 'Property Acquisition – Oldham Town Centre'.

Resolved:

1. That the Cabinet approves the acquisition of the long leasehold interest (777 years remaining) of former Harry's Bar, Yorkshire Street, Oldham.
2. That the Cabinet approves the demolition of the building following acquisition.
3. That the Cabinet approves the creation of a new public square on the cleared site to improve the setting and visibility of the Oldham Coliseum Theatre.
4. That the Cabinet delegates authority to the Executive Director of Place/Deputy Chief Executive, Place, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and the Cabinet Member for Growth, to finalise negotiations, legal

documentation, demolition, and delivery of the public realm scheme.

5. That the Cabinet notes that the Chair of the Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board has exempted this item from Call-in by virtue of Rule 14 of the Council's Constitution.



The meeting started at 6.00pm and ended at 6.25pm

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED
AUTHORITY HELD ON FRIDAY 22nd AUGUST 2025 AT SALFORD TOWN HALL**

PRESENT

GMCA Mayor	Andy Burnham (In the Chair)
Bolton	Councillor Akhtar Zaman
Bury	Councillor Lucy Smith
Manchester	Councillor Joanna Midgley
Oldham	Councillor Elaine Taylor
Rochdale	Councillor Neil Emmott
Salford	City Mayor Paul Dennett
Stockport	Councillor Mark Roberts
Tameside	Councillor Andrew McClaren
Trafford	Councillor Tom Ross
Wigan	Councillor David Molyneux

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

GMFRS	CFO Dave Russel
Chair of GM Overview & Scrutiny	Councillor John Walsh
Chair of Faith & Belief Advisory Panel	Rev. Ian Rutherford
Chair of Trafford Faith Action Network	Councillor Eve Parker
Co-Chair of Race Equality Panel	Paula Watt
Regional Director Natural England	David Renwick
Deputy Reg Director Natural England	Lucy Abram

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Group Chief Executive Officer	Caroline Simpson
Group Deputy Chief Executive	Andrew Lightfoot
Group Deputy Monitoring Officer	Melinda Edwards
Group Chief Finance Officer	Steve Wilson
Group Secretary	Sarah Horseman

Bolton	Sandra Brice
Bury	Paul Lakin
Manchester	Tom Stannard
Oldham	Emma Barton
Rochdale	Julie Murphy
Salford	John Searle
Stockport	Michael Cullen
Tameside	Harry Catherall
Trafford	Sara Todd
Wigan	Alison McKenzie-Folan
Office of the GM Mayor	Kevin Lee
TfGM	Steve Warrener
TfGM	Martin Lax
TfGM	Fran Wilkinson
GMCA	Nicola Ward
GMCA	Lee Teasdale

GMCA 112/25 APOLOGIES

That apologies be received and noted from Councillor Nicolas Peel (Bolton), Councillor Eamonn O'Brien (Bury), Councillor Bev Craig (Manchester), Councillor Arooj Shah (Oldham), Councillor Eleanor Wills (Tameside), Deputy Mayor Kate Green, Sue Johnson (Bolton), Lynne Ridsdale (Bury), Shelley Kipling (Oldham), James Binks (Rochdale) & Melissa Caslake (Salford).

GMCA 113/25 CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS

Mayor Andy Burnham welcomed all to the meeting, noting that this would be the first meeting of the GMCA that was supported by British Sign Language interpreters to ensure that meetings were as accessible to all as possible.

Councillor John Walsh was welcomed to the GMCA following his reappointment as the Chair of the GM Overview & Scrutiny Committee. Councillor Walsh stated that it would be important in the coming year to ensure an appropriate balance between overview

and scrutiny functions. The latest meeting of the Committee had addressed this need well, and it was hoped that would be maintained over the coming year and beyond.

The GMCA expressed its congratulations to all students in the region on their recently announced exam results, with evidence showing that results in the North West region continued to improve, with GM notably contributing to that improvement.

Mayor Burnham invited Caroline Simpson, Group Chief Executive, to provide an update following a legal challenge to the Housing Investment Loans Fund. The competition appeals tribunal had ruled in favour of the GMCA on every single count brought forward. The approach taken was praised by the judge on the matter. The Mayor paid tribute to the Investment Team at the GMCA, and this ruling was a huge endorsement of their professionalism.

Mayor Burnham advised that he and City Mayor Paul Dennett would be meeting with the owners of Salford Red Devils Rugby League Club, following the failure of promises investments, currently leaving the club's future in jeopardy. It was vital to find a solution to take the club out of this current perilous situation in which fixtures were being cancelled.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the GMCA welcome Leo Freeman & Amanda Liddle to their first meeting as British Sign Language interpreters for GMCA meetings going forward.
2. That Councillor John Walsh be welcomed to his first meeting as the Chair of GM Overview & Scrutiny for the municipal year 2025/2026.
3. That the comments highlighted by Councillor John Walsh be received.
4. That congratulations be expressed to all students in the region on their recently announced exam results.
5. That the update on the legal ruling in favour of the GMCA following the competition appeal tribunal challenge on the Housing Investment Loans Fund be received.
6. That it be noted that Mayor Burnham and City Mayor Paul Dennett would be meeting with the owners of Salford Red Devils Rugby Club this afternoon to seek solutions to the ongoing issues at the Club.

GMCA 114/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESOLVED /-

There were none.

GMCA 115/25 GMCA MINUTES 27 JUNE 2025

RESOLVED /-

That the minutes of the GMCA held on 27 June 2025 be approved.

GMCA 116/25 GMCA WASTE & RECYCLING COMMITTEE – 2 JULY 2025

RESOLVED /-

1. That the proceedings of the meeting of the GMCA Waste & Recycling Committee held on 2 July 2025 be noted.
2. That the appointment of Councillor Alan Quinn as the Chair of the Waste & Recycling Committee for 2025/2026 be approved.
3. That the appointment of Councillor Lee-Ann Igbon as Vice Chair of the Waste & Recycling Committee for 2025/2026 be approved.

GMCA 117/25 MINUTES OF THE GMCA AUDIT COMMITTEE – 23 JULY 2025

RESOLVED /-

That the proceedings of the meeting of the GMCA Audit Committee held on 23 July 2025 be noted.

**GMCA 118/25 MINUTES OF THE GMCA OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON 25 JUNE & 23 JULY 2025**

RESOLVED /-

That the proceedings of the meeting of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee meetings held on 25 June & 23 July 2025 be noted.

**GMCA 119/25 MINUTES OF THE GMCA BEE NETWORK COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD ON 24 JULY 2025**

RESOLVED /-

That the proceedings of the meeting of the GMCA Bee Network Committee held on 24 July 2025 be noted.

**GMCA 120/25 GREATER MANCHESTER APPOINTMENTS UPDATE
2025/2026**

Melinda Edwards, Deputy Monitoring Officer, presented a report setting out further appointments to various Committees and other bodies within the Greater Manchester system of governance.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the appointment of 15 substitute members to the GMCA Waste and Recycling Committee be deferred until the September meeting of the GMCA.
2. That Cllr Les Webb (Bolton) be appointed as a substitute member of the Bee Network Committee.
3. That it be noted that the GM Mayor has appointed the following members to the Bee Network Committee – Cllr Peter Crossen (Stockport, Conservative), Cllr Max Woodvine (Oldham, Conservative), Cllr Howard Sykes (Oldham, Lib Dem) and Cllr Jon Byrne (Stockport, Labour).
4. That Cllr Ian Hunter (Stockport, Lib Dem) be appointed as a member of the GMCA Audit Committee.

5. That Cllr Nathan Evans (Trafford) and Cllr Joanne Marshall (Wigan) be appointed as members of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
6. That Cllr Ashley Dearnley (Rochdale) be appointed as a substitute member of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
7. That the appointment of Cllr John Vickers (Wigan) as a substitute member to the GM Joint Clean Air Scrutiny Committee be noted.
8. That the appointment of Cllr Hamid Khurram (Bolton) as substitute member of the Air Quality Administration Committee be noted.

GMCA 121/25 GM PLANNING AND HOUSING COMMISSION TERMS OF REFERENCE

Deputy Mayor Paul Dennett, Portfolio Leader for Housing First presented a report setting out the proposed changes to the terms of reference for the Planning & Housing Commission.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the change of name from the GM Planning & Housing Commission to the Housing First, Planning and Infrastructure Commission be approved.
2. That the Terms of Reference be approved.

GMCA 122/25 FAITH, BELIEF & INTERFAITH COVENANT

Councillor Elaine Taylor, on behalf of Councillor Arooj Shah, Portfolio Leader for Equalities & Communities, presented a report that set out progress made in implementing the Greater Manchester Faith, Belief and Interfaith Covenant following its endorsement by GMCA in March 2024.

Examples of the faith and voluntary sectors coming together to support the community were cited, such as food banks being set up in local churches and mosques. The work on the Covenant really emphasised the importance of partnership, and the ability to listen and create inclusive spaces where everyone could feel a sense of belonging. This was very timely and relevant in a period of continuing heightening community tensions.

Rev. Ian Rutherford, the Chair of the Faith & Belief Advisory Panel was invited to address the GMCA. He stated that the Panel brought together strengths and assets from all of the region's communities to address key issues such as homelessness, food insecurity and digital exclusion. The Panel also brought together resources, credibility and a strong sense of motivation. Examples of the work supported through the Covenant were highlighted through five case studies contained within the supporting report.

Councillor Eve Parker provided insight into the work being undertaken through the Trafford Faith Action Network, launched in September 2024. The intention of the Network was to implement the aims of the Covenant in a way that specifically worked for the Trafford borough and its faith community. Work had taken place on a strategic approach that aligned with the aims Trafford's corporate plan.

Reference was also made to the Faith & Belief Advisory Panel's Community Cohesion Response which responded to community issues that had arisen during the summer of 2024 and continued to flare up. The Response provided a strong unified message of cohesion and inclusion – countering the online misinformation prevalent in recent incidents. A mobilisation plan had been provided to the GMCA, GMP and community safety partnerships for future events.

Comments and Questions

Members welcomed the work of the Trafford Faith Action Network, stating that this should be highlighted as a strong template on which other GM localities should be encouraged to use as an exemplar model.

Members highlighted the importance of the work on community cohesion, highlighting recent personal experience of racially motivated abuse that appears to have been made 'acceptable' amongst some by recent events.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the progress of the Faith, Belief and Interfaith Covenant be noted.
2. That opportunities be championed for implementation of the Covenant in portfolios and localities, including the role of local Interfaith Networks.
3. That the comments received from Rev. Ian Rutherford and Councillor Eve Parker be welcomed.

4. That the Trafford Faith Action Network be highlighted as a strong template which other GM localities were encouraged to use as an exemplar model.

GMCA 123/25 EQUALITIES & COMMUNITIES

Councillor Elaine Taylor, on behalf of Councillor Arooj Shah, Portfolio Leader for Equalities and Communities, presented a report summarising the activity and impact of the Greater Manchester Equality Panels over the last year. The report provided a clear reminder of the role that the Race Equality Panel played in ensuring that equality, diversity and inclusion remained at the centre of all work across the region.

The report did not just present the achievements of the Panel but also highlighted the challenges that continued to be faced. This honesty helped leaders and institutions to do better.

Paula Watt, Co-Chair of the Race Equality Panel was invited to contribute her thoughts. She stated that the Panel sought to fight racial discrimination and foster positive relationships and embed its work within public policy. This year the Panel had focussed on policing, mental health, employment and housing. These had been specifically chosen by the Panel as themes as they were considered areas of concern within the community – work had taken place with key stakeholders in each of these areas.

Representation in leadership had been highlighted as a key area of work, and the Civic Leadership Programme run by GMCA sought to address this by bringing through a generation of young people from across all of GM's communities. It was advised the the region's Chief Executive network had frequent conversations around what more could be done to address imbalances throughout all GM organisations.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the activity and impact of the Equality Panels be noted.
2. That endorsement be given by all portfolios to proactively engage with Equality Panels on issues that impact communities-of-identity.
3. That the comments received from Co-Chair of the Race Equality Panel Paula Watt be welcomed.

**GMCA 124/25 GREATER MANCHESTER'S REMEDIATION ACCELERATION
PLAN: ENSURING FIRE SAFETY IN FLATS AS PART OF THE
RESPONSE TO GRENFELL**

Deputy Mayor Paul Dennett, Portfolio Leader for Housing First, presented a report providing an update to the Authority on the development of the Greater Manchester Remediation Acceleration Plan (RAC).

The agreement of the first iteration of the RAC in December 2024 and built upon significant work that had already been taking place since the Grenfell disaster in 2017. However, a new era was now being entered, as where previously all work had focussed on buildings 18m+ in height, there was now a requirement to remediate for all buildings 11m+ in height. This meant that 196 buildings in GM now required remediation. This would require access to a significant level of funding to commence this work.

The importance of supporting resident management and right to manage companies was highlighted. These were usually made up of volunteers, who now had to navigate a legislatively complicated environment. Thanks were expressed to the 'Manchester Cladiators' group, who had become experts in this domain, supporting residents freely with their time, energy and efforts.

CFO Dave Russel emphasised the need for a 'relentless' commitment to delivery, as this was a great opportunity for thorough remediation through the funding now made available. A whole GM system response was needed to most effectively deliver on this.

Comments and Questions

Members stated that there was a concerning shortage of class 3 building inspectors, and this needed to be lobbied on as it would have an impact if there were not enough of these fully trained inspectors available to support the work.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the contents of the Greater Manchester Remediation Acceleration Plan and delivery arrangements be noted and that the Plan be endorsed.

2. That members be asked to take part in lobbying the insurance industry on the urgent need to train more class 3 building inspectors.

GMCA 125/25 GREATER MANCHESTER LOCAL NATURE RECOVERY PLAN

Councillor Tom Ross, Portfolio Leader for Green City Region, presented Greater Manchester's Local Nature Recovery Strategy which had been developed over the last two years with our local authorities and wider stakeholders.

David Renwick, Regional Director for Natural England was invited to address the GMCA. He stated that the key aim for Natural England was to create resilience in nature, and that this could only be achieved through building partnerships to support recovery, and GM formed a great example of this partnership working. The collective local nature recovery plans across the north of England had been brought together collectively as 'Nature North' which would in turn bring together a plan to support local actions.

Comments and Questions

Members highlighted the importance of ensuring green spaces in the urban environment within all of GM's communities. This was particularly important in areas most at risk of the phenomenon of urban heat islands, which contributed to heat related excess deaths.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy be endorsed.
2. That it be recommended that the Mayor approves the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy for publication, in his capacity as Responsible Authority for Greater Manchester.
3. That the comments highlighted by Natural England representatives be noted.
4. That members emphasised the importance of green spaces within all the region's communities, particularly those areas most at risk of becoming 'urban heat islands'.

**GMCA 126/25 OUR PASS DIGITISATION: INTRODUCTION OF A NEW
PRODUCT FOR 18-21 YEAR OLDS TO INCREASE ACCESS
TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT THROUGH AFFORDABLE AND
SIMPLER FARES FOR TICKETING**

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, provided an update on the delivery of Digital Our Pass and proposes the introduction of a new product for 18-21 year olds to increase access to public transport through affordable and simpler fares and ticketing.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the introduction of a half price 28-day Bee Bus ticket for 18–21-year-olds living in Greater Manchester be approved.
2. That the delivery of Digital Our Pass be noted.

GMCA 127/25 ACTIVE TRAVEL FUNDING FOR SCHEMES

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester presented a report seeking approval to allocate funding received from Active Travel England.

The allocations reflected a call from leaders that there had been struggles with the wider fabric of highways and pavements around some of the active travel schemes and that more needed to be done in recognising those pressures within the allocations.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the allocation of £5.2m revenue funding, consisting of Active Travel Fund 4, Active Travel Fund 5 and the Consolidated Active Travel Fund be approved as follows:
 - Bee Network scheme Development (Local Authority led): £2.22m;
 - Behaviour Change: £1.74m;
 - Cycle Hire: £1m; and
 - Programme Management and Network Monitoring: £0.201m

2. That the allocation of £15.2m capital funding, consisting of Active Travel Fund 5 and the Consolidated Active Travel Fund be approved as follows, noting there is a further £1.5m capital funding to be allocated by GMCA at a later date:
 - Active Travel Infrastructure Pipeline Delivery: £8.6m;
 - School Streets: £2m;
 - Bee Network Crossings: £2m;
 - Remedial Works: £1.1m;
 - Cycle Hire: £0.5m;
 - Secure Cycle Parking: £0.5m; and
 - Wayfinding: £0.5m
3. That the associated drawdown requests in relation to the capital allocations will be considered by the Bee Network Committee at the meeting held on Tuesday 19th August 2025, subject to GMCA approval of the overall allocations be noted.

GMCA 128/25 BUSINESS CASE DEVELOPMENT FOR RAPID TRANSIT LINES IN GREATER MANCHESTER

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Great Manchester, presented a report setting out the next steps for potential major fixed track investments in support of GM's growth ambition, and as part of the GM Integrated Pipeline.

The schemes planned to be taken forward were highlighted, noting that they were all at differing stages of progress. The stage 1 process was the strategic outline business case, making the arguments for becoming a government funded scheme. Stage 2 formed the outline business case, before finally Stage 3 forming the full business case.

One scheme of particular note was the Oldham-Rochdale-Heywood-Bury pathfinder scheme, which would be important for Atom Valley and would provide an orbital link much sought in the northern part of GM. A target date for works beginning on these scheme had been set for 2028.

The Stockport tram network extension was referenced, with the strategic outline business case on this being expected to conclude in the autumn.

Work would also now commence on the proposals for an underground rail system for the region – as the current rapid transit system in the regional centre was unlikely to have sufficient capacity to accommodate demand by the middle of the century, driven by continued population and economic growth – and by the need for non-car modes to accommodate a higher proportion growth in line with the Right Mix.

Comments and Questions

Concern was raised about the lack of progress made on making Walkden Station an accessible station, as work around this was all set to commence five years ago. The Mayor stated that he had met with Network Rail management and conveyed the disappointment around the lack of progress on this scheme. The Mayor would also make an ask to the Group Chief Executive to look at the possibility of using the new 'right to request' facility through the English Devolution Bill to acquire further funding to support Access for All.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the contents of the report be noted.
2. That the next steps be endorsed.
3. That the Group Chief Executive be requested to look at the possibility of using 'right to request' to acquire further funding to support Access for All.

GMCA 129/25 GM LOCAL INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK – APPROVAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Councillor David Molyneux, Portfolio Leader for Resources & Investment, presented a report seeking approval of a £600,000 loan facility to Social AdVentures Limited, an amendment to the loan provided to Evergreen House Limited, and approval of two investments through GM Advance.

RESOLVED /-

1. That a loan of up to £600,000 to Social AdVentures Limited be approved.
2. That a loan of up to £150,000 to Insightful Brands Ltd be approved.
3. That an investment of up to £150,000 to Gennate Limited be approved.
4. That an amendment to Evergreen House Limited loan be approved.

5. That the delegated approval of a loan of up to £450,000 to Ecobelt Limited, a loan of up to £370,000 to United Canning Limited and an investment of £50,000 to 9N Limited be noted.
6. That authority be delegated to the Combined Authority Treasurer in consultation with the Combined Authority Monitoring Officer to review the due diligence information in respect of the above investments, and, subject to their satisfactory review and agreement of the due diligence information and the overall detailed commercial terms of the investments, to sign off any outstanding conditions, issue final approvals and complete any necessary related documentation in respect of the investments noted above.
7. That it be noted that going forward an annual impact report will be prepared for the GMCA which will highlight examples of job creation made possible through the GM Local Investment Framework.

GMCA 130/25 NORTHERN GATEWAY MAYORAL DEVELOPMENT

Tom Stannard, on behalf of Councillor Bev Craig, Portfolio Leader for Economy, Business and Inclusive Growth, presented a report setting out the results of the consultation on the establishment of a Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) covering the Northern Gateway sites in Atom Valley and seeking approval for the next steps in the process.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the results of the consultation exercise in respect of the designation of a Mayoral Development Corporation for Northern Gateway be noted.
2. That the Mayor's response to the consultation be noted.
3. That it be noted that recommendations to support the designation of the 'Atom Valley Northern Gateway' MDC were approved by Bury and Rochdale Councils at their meetings on 9 July 2025 and 29 July 2025, respectively
4. That due consideration be given to the proposal by the Mayor to designate an area, identified on the plan at Appendix 3, as a Mayoral Development Area and notify the Mayor within the consideration period if it proposes to reject the proposal.

5. That it be noted that subject the GMCA not rejecting the proposal as set out at recommendation 4 above, the Mayor shall publicise the designation, notify the Secretary of State of the designation and the name to be given to the Mayoral Development Corporation, as follows: “Atom Valley Northern Gateway Mayoral Development Corporation.”

GMCA 131/25 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

That, under section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public should be excluded from the meeting for the following items on business on the grounds that this involved the likely disclosure of exempt information, as set out in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

GMCA 132/25 GREATER MANCHESTER INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK

RESOLVED /-

That the report be noted.

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**NOTICE OF DECISIONS AGREED AT THE GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED
AUTHORITY
HELD ON FRIDAY, 26TH SEPTEMBER, 2025**

PRESENT:

GM Mayor	Mayor Andy Burnham (in the Chair)
GMCA	Deputy Mayor Kate Green
Bury	Councillor Eamonn O'Brien
Manchester	Councillor Bev Craig
Oldham	Councillor Arooj Shah
Rochdale	Councillor Neil Emmott
Salford	City Mayor Paul Dennett
Stockport	Councillor Jilly Julian
Tameside	Councillor Eleanor Wills
Trafford	Councillor Tom Ross
Wigan	Councillor David Molyneux

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Chair of GM Overview & Scrutiny	Councillor John Walsh
Health Innovation Manchester	Ben Bridgewater
BBC	Josie Cahill
GAMMA Board	Dr Mike Murray

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Group Chief Executive Officer	Caroline Simpson
Group Deputy Chief Executive	Andrew Lightfoot
Group Monitoring Officer	Gill Duckworth
Group Chief Finance Officer	Steve Wilson
Group Secretary	Sarah Horsman
Bolton	Sue Johnson
Bury	Lynne Ridsdale
Manchester	Rebecca Heron
Oldham	Shelley Kipling

Rochdale	James Binks
Salford	Miranda Cannon
Stockport	Michael Cullen
Tameside	Harry Catherall
Trafford	Sara Todd
Wigan	Alison McKenzie-Folan
Office of the GM Mayor	Kevin Lee
TfGM	Martin Lax
GMCA	Sylvia Welsh
GMCA	Lee Teasdale

1. Apologies

That apologies be received from Councillor Nicholas Peel (Bolton) and Councillor Mark Roberts (Stockport) and Tom Stannard (Manchester) and Stephen Young (Salford).

2. Chairs Announcements & Urgent Business

1. That it be noted that the meeting is the first GMCA meeting to have fully livestreamed British Sign Language (BSL) interpretation in accordance with the Mayor's commitments to accessibility.
2. That the update on industrial action relating to bus services on the Bee Network be noted.
3. That the update on successful court case in relation to the Greater Manchester Housing Loans Fund and the reimbursement of court case costs to the GMCA be noted.

3. Declarations of Interest

1. That Deputy Mayor Kate Green declared an interest in item 9B by virtue of being a board member of Manchester Camerata, and item 9C by virtue of being a governor of Manchester Metropolitan University.

4. Minutes

4a. GMCA Minutes – 22 August 2025

That the minutes of the GMCA meeting held on 22 August 2025 be approved.

4b. GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 20 August 2025

That the proceedings of the meeting of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 20 August 2025 be noted.

4c. Bee Network Committee – 19 August 2025

That the proceedings of the meeting of the Bee Network Committee held on 19 August 2025 be noted.

4d. GMCA Audit Committee – 22 September 2025

That the proceedings of the GMCA Audit Committee meeting held on 22 September 2025 be noted.

5. Government Policies

5a. English Devolution and Communities Empowerment Bill

1. That the verbal update provided by Mayor Andy Burnham be received.
2. That the intention of the GMCA to put forward amendments in relation to taxi licensing and local accountability of housing providers be noted.
3. That it be noted that the options around local accountability of housing providers will be discussed further by Leaders for consideration ahead of any next steps.
4. That it be noted that the English Devolution and Communities Empowerment Bill also included a right-to-request mechanism.
5. That it be noted that three areas have been identified for consideration as part of the right-to-request mechanism in the first instance:
 - Tourist Levies
 - Devolution of Skills

- Employment Support

6. Healthy Homes for All

**6a. Mayoral Development Corporation for the Old Trafford Regeneration
Mayoral Development Corporation – Consultation Results & Approval to
Designate (Key Decision)**

1. That the results of the consultation exercise in respect of the designation of a Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) for the Old Trafford Regeneration area be noted.
2. That the Mayor of Greater Manchester's response to the consultation be noted.
3. That it be noted that support for designation of the 'Old Trafford Regeneration' MDC was approved by the Leader of Trafford Council under delegated authority.
4. That the Leader of Trafford Council confirmed consent to the designation of the proposed MDC.
5. That due consideration was given to the proposal by the Mayor to designate an area, identified on the plan at Appendix 3, as a Mayoral Development Area and that the GMCA will notify the Mayor within the consideration period if it proposed to reject the proposal.
6. That it be noted that subject to the GMCA not rejecting the proposal, as set out at recommendation 4 above, the Mayor shall publicise the designation, notify the Secretary of State of the designation and the name to be given to the Mayoral Development Corporation, as follows: "Old Trafford Regeneration Mayoral Development Corporation".

**6b. Stockport Town Centre Mayoral Development Corporation Expansion:
Consultation Outcomes & Final Approval (Key Decision)**

1. That the outcome and responses to the consultation undertaken by the Mayor of Greater Manchester on the proposed expansion of the Stockport Mayoral development area and creation of a new Mayoral Development Corporation to cover this expanded area be noted.
2. That it be noted that Stockport Council Cabinet agreed its support for the proposal set out above at its meeting on 16th September 2025.

3. That the Deputy Leader of Stockport Council, on behalf of the Leader of Stockport Council, confirmed consent to the designation of the proposed MDC.
4. That due consideration be given to the proposal by the Mayor of Greater Manchester to designate this expanded area as a Mayoral Development Area (see map at Appendix One) and that the GMCA will notify the Mayor within the consideration period if it proposes to reject the proposal.
5. That it be noted that following the expiration of the consideration period, if the GMCA has not rejected the proposal, the Mayor intended to take the necessary steps to designate the expanded area as a Mayoral Development Area and to secure the establishment of the new MDC (to be named “Stockport Town Centre Mayoral Development Corporation”) and the dissolution of the existing MDC including any necessary transfer of rights and liabilities.

6c. Creation of Greater Manchester Regeneration Skills Academy

1. That approval be given for the creation of the Greater Manchester Regeneration Skills Academy (“GMRSA”).
2. That it be noted that the GMCA will receive proposals for the first round of funding under the 10-year investment pipeline at its November 2025 meeting.

7. Everyday Support in Every Neighbourhood

7a. Prevention Demonstrator, Live Well and NHS 10 Year Plan/Integrated Care Board Reforms

1. That the contents of the report and any implications be noted.
2. That the feedback from the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee be received.
3. That consideration will be given to a direct councillor referral route to Live Well, as recommended by the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

8. Healthy Lives

8a. Greater Manchester's Commitment to Gender Equality in Sport, Physical Activity and Movement

1. That the GMCA confirms its commitment to leadership on gender inequality in active lives, and lead in their place to support movement, physical activity and sport for all women and girls.
2. That a commitment to the Brighton Helsinki Declaration on Women and Girls be signed.

9. A Great Place to do Business

9a. Adopting Frontier Sector Development Plans (Key Decision)

1. That the frontier sector plans be adopted.
2. That the proposed next steps with the intention for these plans to inform the Local Growth Plan Government has asked the GMCA to produce and for the plans to be refreshed annually be noted.

9b. Greater Manchester Culture Fund Process 2026-2029 (Key Decision)

1. That the impact of GM Cultural Investment 2023-26 be noted.
2. That the GM Culture Investment Approach 2026-2029 be approved.
3. That the outlined process for the GM Culture Investment 2026-29 be approved.
4. That an indicative investment period of three years, subject to annual review and approval of the Culture Fund as part of the GMCA annual budget setting process, be approved, in principle.
5. That the timeline for the GMCA Culture Fund to open for bids in preparation for the new investment approach starting from April 2026 be agreed.
6. That the establishment of a new sector-led body for culture in Greater

Manchester, recognising the need for strong sector leadership, be approved.

7. That it be noted that, the decision of the impact tool, and that the proposed approach will support equality inclusion, health outcomes and the economy in Greater Manchester.

9c. Greater Manchester Civic Universities Agreement

1. That the refreshed approach by GM's universities embodied in the Greater Manchester Civic University Agreement (CUA) be noted and endorsed.
2. That it be noted that the CUA was a living document and can be revisited in light of developments to the Greater Manchester Strategy.
3. That it be noted that following the endorsement of the GMCA at recommendation 1, a public announcement will follow in October 2025 at the CUA Citizens' Panel.

10. Investment & Resources

10a. Revenue Budget Update – Quarter 1 2025/26

That the forecast position at 30th June 2025 be noted.

10b. Capital Budget Update – Quarter 1 2025/26

That the current 2025/26 forecast of £652.9m compared to the 2025/26 budget of £598.3m be noted.

A link to the full agenda and papers can be found here: [Greater Manchester Combined Authority](#)

This decision notice was issued 30 September 2025 on behalf of Sarah Horseman, Secretary to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Broadhurst House, 56 Oxford Street, Manchester M1 6EU. The deadline for call in of the attached decisions is 4.00pm on 07 October 2025.

Call-In Process

In accordance with the scrutiny procedure rules, these decisions would come into effect five days after the publication of this notice unless before that time any three members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee decides to call-in a decision.

Members must give notice in writing to the Chief Executive that they wish to call-in a decision, stating their reason(s) why the decision should be scrutinised. The period between the publication of this decision notice and the time a decision may be implemented is the 'call-in' period.

Decisions which have already been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and where the GMCA's decision agrees with the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may not be called in.

Portfolio Report

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Elaine Taylor, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods.

This report provides an update on the main activity since the last Council meeting relating to the portfolio responsibilities.

Launch of Communities Regeneration Partnership Capital Funding:

Following my last portfolio update, the Communities Regeneration Partnership Capital Funding Programme, which represents a significant capital investment of £4.9 million, has now officially launched. This funding is aimed at supporting Voluntary, Community, Faith, and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) organisations across Oldham to improve and transform community spaces and create stronger, healthier, more vibrant neighbourhoods. The application window is open until 19 January 2026 and application support is being provided by Action Together to ensure organisations are well-equipped to submit strong proposals.

Street Cleansing:

We have taken delivery of two new compact sweepers. The units have been designed with an additional third brush which will allow them to carry a specially designed brush for removal of weed growth. This will then allow them to support the team carrying out boroughwide weed treatment.

Our sweepers have now moved into their busiest period of the year addressing leaf fall. This initially focuses on areas of high flood risk and then moves to areas with significant tree cover, moving around the borough. We aim to clear the bulk of leaf fall by January; however, the weather can impact operations. During leaf fall season, sweepers clear over one thousand tons of leaves. We have to date completed full second weed spraying treatment to Failsworth East, Failsworth West and the Hollinwood wards, and we have also focused on main road and District Centres across the Borough. With all Wards having well established hardy perennial weeds, progress has been slow owing to additional treatments with specialist herbicides being required to target them. This has in effect meant two treatments have been carried out during the first round of spraying.

The weather has now impacted spraying; however, as the cold weather kicks in, weeds are naturally dying back. The plan is for teams to commence highway weed spraying next year, as early as we can, to allow us sufficient time to carry out two full treatments.

Community Safety:

A robust media campaign to raise awareness of Hate Crime has been delivered along with hate awareness sessions to school governors and staff from frontline services. Further work is also being developed to develop community ambassadors to support victims of hate. The Council is also working with Stop Hate UK.

In response to reports of the Borough wide issue of firework nuisance, this year saw the return of the Operation Treacle multi-agency patrols. Over five key nights, which were determined by partnership intelligence, Community Safety Officers teamed up with GMP to patrol around the whole borough, engaging with members of the community of all ages, offering safety advice, and where necessary, issuing warnings or taking further action. This project was funded through the Community Safety Partnership, as part of problem-solving activity.

The 3-year review of the Open Moorland PSPO, which aims to educate individuals and prevent serious fires on the moorland, through prohibition of behaviours, such as, the possession of disposable barbecues on the land, has been undertaken and a new 3-year PSPO took effect on the 1st November. This is the 3rd extension of the Order and since being put into place, there have been no serious fires on the land.

Housing:

October saw the launch of the public consultation with regards to proposed changes we wish to make to the Allocations Policy. Key Stakeholders and Partners have also been consulted, including, members of Oldham's Strategic Housing Partnership. There will be a final workshop session with partners, following the results from public consultation. A report and draft policy will then be written up for consideration by Cabinet (currently scheduled for December).

We have over 8,200 households on the housing register with a defined housing need and we saw a spike at the end of September with almost 100 more housing applications received in that month than the month previous. The team continues to meet their service standards of registering and making all eligible housing applications live where all the information has been received within 10 working days.

The Housing Options Service re-design implementation is now well underway with several new posts being advertised and recruited too. We have seen some new starters in post and it is envisaged that the service should be fully staffed and operational before the Christmas break. The number of households in Temporary Accommodation remains stable with the current total standing at 575 households at the end of September. The main reasons for homelessness are friends and family no longer willing to accommodate, loss of private rented sector accommodation, release from custody and domestic abuse.

Housing Standards:

On 27th October 2025, Awaab's Law came into force. The law looks to implement the lessons learned because of the tragic death of a child in a property that had damp and mould.

The new law introduces a clear criteria and response times for social landlords when dealing with complaints regarding property standards. Specifically, social landlords must:

- Investigate emergency damp and mould hazards within 24 hours
- Investigate other reports within 10 working days
- Provide a written summary of findings within 3 working days
- Begin repairs within 5 working days of identifying a hazard

This will, hopefully, ensure tenants living in socially rented properties are living in good accommodation with any problems being dealt with quickly and effectively.

Planning:

Our Development Management Service has made two small but important changes to some of their processes this past month. The new Planning Application Validation Checklist was implemented on the 3rd of November after the recent consultation. The Checklist sets the required documentation that a planning application needs to include for the Planning Service to be able to validate the application to assess it. We have also introduced QR codes on neighbour notification letters to make it easier for residents to directly access details and documents on our website in order to make comments on the application from there.

The Development Management team have also been pleased to welcome two new graduates to the team in October, which will bolster capacity in this very busy service. Despite how busy the team is, performance stats submitted to government continue to exceed MHCLG's targets.

Our Strategic Planning team launched the consultation for the Article 4 Direction on HMOs, which runs until 16th November, with Local Plan Member Workshops taking place earlier this month.

Recommendations: Council is requested to note the report.

Portfolio Report

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Abdul Jabbar, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services & Sustainability.

This report provides an update on the main activity since the last Council meeting relating to portfolio responsibilities.

Finance: The Statement of Accounts for 2024/25 was published by the statutory deadline and our External Auditors, Forvis Mazars LLP have now commenced their audit. Fieldwork testing is progressing well with no significant issues identified, and it is expected that the accounts will be signed off later this calendar year.

The budget challenge for 2025/26 at the end of Month 5 is estimated to be £23.209m (£20.822m at the end of Quarter 1) which is a movement of £2.387m from the position previously reported. Oldham is not an outlier. Several Councils around the country are continuing to battle the cost and demand for essential services. Within GM, there are significant challenges regarding statutory services such as Adult and Children's Social Care. Early management actions have been undertaken with enhanced spending and recruitment controls implemented. It is expected that the impacts of this early action will be shown in future monitoring reports. Given the in-year financial position, the Council is eagerly awaiting the Policy Statement from the Government in early November, and the Provisional Settlement is expected to be released late December.

Revenues and Benefits: We continue to make good progress with the collection of Council Tax and Business Rates both in line with last year at the end of Quarter 2. Recovery of arrears brought forward in 2025/26 now stands at £2.8m for Council Tax. The Accounts Receivable/Payable team are also making good progress with the position at the end of Q2 showing 68.2% of the current year debt collected and over 90% of invoices paid within 30 days.

The Benefits team continues to see high volumes of Universal Credit change in circumstances due to the Department of Work and Pensions programme of migration to Universal Credit. A key focus has been on reducing claim backlogs resulting from migration activity. Claims for Council Tax Reduction have been reduced to 38 and new claims for Housing Benefits reducing to 20 days.

Officers continue to work with colleagues in Adult Social Care to monitor progress with the improvement plan for the Financial Assessment team, and we are pleased to report that the backlog of cases is reducing. We are benchmarking our performance and processes with colleagues across Greater Manchester to identify efficiencies and best practice.

Pension Credit: Our Pension Credit campaign for Autumn 2025 in partnership with Citizens Advice Oldham has started in alignment with the Department for Work and Pensions campaign. 251 residents who may be eligible have received a letter outlining how to apply and the support available. We have followed this up with a phone call to check if any further support is needed with home visits available through the District Team. Communication has also been shared on our social channels encouraging loved ones to support and encourage residents of pension age to claim. My message to residents this Autumn is simple – do not hesitate to claim Pension Credit if you are eligible. There is help available once again to make an application and I urge you to come forward for support.

Digital Inclusion: Last month saw us celebrate Digitober 2025 showcasing the work across Greater Manchester to reduce the digital divide and Get Online Week. We have been raising awareness of the on and offline support we offer across the borough as part of our ambition to drive down the digital divide and become one of the most digitally inclusive towns in the UK. We've also created a digital roadmap that guides residents to all the support and resources they need to get online, including Discover HOOT, Get Online at Your Local Library, and free mobile data packages giving up to 12 months of access. As a result, more residents than ever are able to get online, access

services, and build confidence with digital tools. We continue to work collaboratively with partners to improve Oldham's digital offer, ensuring that even more residents have access to the online services they need to thrive. I have attended alongside officers and Inclusive Bytes CIC at the Greater Manchester Digital Inclusion Summit where I was proud to share our work. Inclusive Bytes continue to deliver range of activities from the Unit at Spindles. I encourage everyone to look at their fantastic offer of engaging activities.

IT and Digital: IT have resumed the deployment of the laptop refresh which now continues to deliver Microsoft Surface devices to staff across services. The Wi-Fi refresh continues across the Borough sites as does the migration of services into the Cloud. Activity in decommissioning the Civic Data Centre continues with the first service being migrated from the Civic into Spindles. IT work in preparing infrastructure required for the readiness of the JR Clynes completed along with IT infrastructure in the second Children's home whilst IT infrastructure work continues in the Spindles Markets, Events and Archives area. Regarding the Waste application then investigations continue to explore how the Bulky Waste collections will be processed with BARTEC.

IT policies are being developed including a new policy for AI which has been reviewed by the Digital Board and is to be reviewed by the Trade Unions. This will then provide a clear framework for all staff in using AI responsibly. A new 5-year IT and Digital Strategy and a Data strategy is also in development.

Climate Change & Green New Deal: The Council has signed the contract with its preferred contractor for Wrigley Head Solar Farm with the team on site ready to begin construction imminently. The perimeter security fence is currently being installed. Preparation of tender documents for the Oldham Green New Deal Partner is continuing with a view to publication January 2026. The tender documents will incorporate the large quantity of positive feedback the Council received from its Market Engagement exercise. The Low Carbon Heat Network anchor project continues to be developed, and the Council is in the final stages of confirming that it can use some of its Green Heat Network Fund capital grant to implement Early Works in the town centre.

HR & OD: The HR & OD service has published a ReBuild programme to strengthen and transform services. This is based on core pillars of *Strategy, Systems & Infrastructure, Structure, Team Development and Engagement and Governance*. Work also continues to drive the Council's ambition to be a great place to work. Following a series of collaboration sessions, a new staff induction is being launched on 21st November to ensure a consistent and engaging experience for all new starters. Each of our Equity peer support groups is now sponsored by a member of Management Board to provide direction and support for inclusivity. We also continue to drive our ambition to grow our own talent, by welcoming six new Graduates, each bringing fresh ideas and ambitions to make a difference for our communities. We supported the Get Oldham Working Jobs Fair in September with a total of 77 residents registering interest in our apprenticeship programmes, supporting growth and prosperity in the borough.

Governance: The door-to-door (personal canvass) stage of the annual canvass concluded on 29 September, marking the end of the active canvassing period. This phase involved personal visits to households that had not responded to earlier requests for information, in line with statutory requirements. With this stage now complete, the Elections Team is working to process all responses and updates received. This includes verifying and inputting changes to household and individual elector details to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the register. All updates will be finalised in readiness for the publication of the revised electoral register on 1 December. We have concluded our review of members' allowances working with other services in the Resources Directorate, with the findings presented to the Audit Committee. The team has also supported the Independent Remuneration Panel to prepare its report to Council, which on the agenda for this council meeting.

Recommendations: Council is requested to note the report.

Portfolio Report

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Shaid Mushtaq, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People.

This report provides an update on the main activity since the last Council meeting relating to Portfolio activities.

Children's Social Care and Early Help are currently supporting 3,448 children and young people through a range of plans, including 916 receiving early help, 1,378 children in need, 407 subject to child protection plans, 599 children looked after, and 472 care leavers (as of 9 October 2025).

Social Work Services

Within our Duty and Advice service, the conversion rate to referral has remained at 19%, indicating that many contacts are being appropriately managed without progressing to formal referral. Compared to the same period last year, we have seen a 12% reduction in referrals and a 7% reduction in overall contacts, reflecting improved early intervention and triage.

The Complex Safeguarding Hub continues to play a vital role in protecting our most vulnerable young people, 40% relating to child sexual exploitation and 60% to child criminal exploitation. The Hub is actively supporting 132 ongoing police investigations and 12 operations, including Operation Sherwood, which focuses on historic child sexual exploitation. To date, 23 arrests have been made and 8 survivors are engaging with the investigation.

I am proud of the innovative work being undertaken by the team, including the use of virtual reality headsets to educate over 100 young people on decision-making and risk. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, and further sessions are planned in schools and residential settings. The recent peer review of the Hub highlighted strengths in trusted relationships, multi-agency working, and family engagement. Areas for development, such as the need for a safeguarding nurse and more strength-based planning, are being addressed through an action plan.

Children in need are supported by a stable social work team to achieve better outcomes. We continue to focus on care planning for children subject to child protection plans and particularly within court proceedings, and I'm pleased to note a reduction in the number of cases exceeding statutory court timescales.

Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership

The Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership (OSCP) has been active in promoting awareness and improving responses to Child Sexual Abuse (CSA). A CSA Practice Week took place week commencing 13 October, supported by training and resources from the Centre of Expertise. I'm delighted that over 400 practitioners from across the partnership participated in events across the week to highlight this important area of practice with positive feedback received. The Strategic Safeguarding Partnership has reviewed CAMHS waiting times and school attendance for children involved with social care, with plans to develop a strategy to improve attendance. The OSCP annual report has been signed off and will be published shortly.

Corporate Parenting

Internal fostering continues to be well utilised, with 54% of all children looked after placed with Oldham Fostering Service. The commissioning team continue to engage with potential residential providers to ensure quality and sufficiency across the private provider market. Our semi-independent accommodation is full, with planned admissions supporting step-downs from residential care. I am pleased to report that 53% of care leavers aged 18–21 are in education, employment, or training which is an improvement since the last report.

We recently celebrated our foster carers at the annual awards evening, which included a Mayoral Appreciation Award. November is National Care Leavers Month, and a calendar of events is planned to celebrate and support our young people.

On Friday 31st October the Leaving Care service attended Coram Voice's 'A National Voice Awards' in London and won 2nd Place in the category of Participation Awards for the success of the Leaving Care Football Team.

Workforce

Our overall vacancy rate is 18% and agency rate at 10% (19.5% for qualified social workers). We continue to convert agency staff into permanent roles through a strong workforce offer and ensuring compliance with new DfE agency social worker arrangements. We celebrated our social work graduates and newly qualified social workers on 17 October and are planning our annual Children's Services staff celebration for February 2026.

Family Help

Family Help services have seen an increase in referrals following the return to school. The Domestic Abuse team is delivering timely support despite high demand. New arrangements for legal and immigration advice are helping to provide a better service for families with no recourse to public funds.

Early Years

Early Years services are preparing for the Best Start in Life event in November, which will focus on improving outcomes and closing the gap for children eligible for Free School Meals. A successful pilot of the "Talking Tools" speech and language intervention will now be rolled out more widely.

Youth Services

Youth Services continue to deliver 45 sessions per week, including targeted work in areas affected by youth violence. The "Listen to the Earth" anti-hate programme is underway, and new LGBTQ+ sessions have launched in schools. The service has secured funding from #BeeWell for projects focused on girls' physical activity and youth voice.

Finally, the Outdoor and Environmental Education Service has secured £47,500 to deliver outdoor adventures for 390 young people. The Summer HAF programme supported 2,756 children and served over 20,000 meals. I am pleased to confirm that funding was extended to deliver the October Half-Term HAF programme, ensuring continued support for families during the school holidays.

Summary

The Children and Young People Portfolio continues to deliver vital services to support Oldham's children, young people, and families. We have seen notable achievements in workforce stabilisation, innovative safeguarding practice, and improved outcomes for care leavers. Our teams have demonstrated resilience and creativity in responding to sustained high demand and have embraced new approaches such as virtual reality education and youth-led initiatives.

However, challenges remain. Workforce pressures, particularly in safeguarding and care planning, continue to impact service delivery, and we are working hard on continuity for families.

Despite these pressures, the commitment across our services to improve outcomes and ensure children are safe, supported, and able to thrive remains unwavering. I want to thank all staff, partners, and carers for their continued dedication and compassion. Together, we are making a difference in the lives of Oldham's children and young people.

Recommendations: Council is requested to note the report.

Report to COUNCIL – 12th November 2025

Portfolio Report

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Barbara Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Adults, Health & Wellbeing

This report provides an update on the main activity since the last Council meeting relating to portfolio responsibilities.

Public Health:

NHS Health Checks (NHS HC) is a nationally mandated service. Residents aged 40-74 who haven't already been diagnosed with certain conditions are eligible for a health check every five years. In Oldham, NHS HCs are delivered in primary care. These health checks are an important way for us to identify the risk of cardiovascular diseases and provide advice, and early treatment.

In 2024, we identified that not all residents who attended received a quality health check. So in the last year we have focused on improving quality. In order to do this, a change in the service specification was implemented for 2024/2025, which requires a minimum of 8 out of the 10 NHS HC elements to be completed to achieve payment. This must include a QRisk score, which estimates the 10-year risk of developing cardiovascular disease, such as a heart attack or stroke.

Since this change, we have seen a sharp increase in both the number of NHS HCs carried out and their quality. Our rates are now significantly above the England average and neighbouring Local Authorities. Over 10,000 NHS HCs were carried out in 2024/2025. Based on the current eligible population of Oldham, we will exceed the national target of 75% of eligible residents receiving their check every five years.

From January to March of 2025, 3,664 Oldham residents received an NHS HC of which 74% were of a good quality. This is nearly 2,000 more health checks than in the same period in the year before. Those 3,664 health checks resulted in 878 diagnoses made, 947 referrals to services, and advice issued 3,835 times.

We are diagnosing many more health conditions than ever before during NHS HCs health in Oldham, including diabetes, chronic kidney disease, hypertension, and heart failure. Number of diagnoses has increased each quarter throughout 2024/2025, as has advice given and referrals made, with a significant increase in weight management referrals.

We will continue to monitor our progress and work closely with primary care colleagues to build on the significant improvements we have seen in the quality and reach of NHS HCs in Oldham.

Adult Social Care:

Adult Social Care (ASC) is in the process of a Care Quality Commission (CQC) assessment. The inspection process began on 9th June 2025 and is due to be completed at the end of October 2025. ASC have shared a self-assessment with CQC highlighting many areas they are proud of which include; our workforce and culture with low vacancy rates (4.8%) and turnover rates (22.5%) below national averages across all sectors.

A robust Adult Referral Contact Centre (ARCC) front door service that operates to meet the needs of people as soon as possible. 77% of people who have contacted ARCC have been provided with advice or signposted to appropriate services, reducing the need for statutory support services. ASC's preventative strength-based approach to supporting people with 82% of audited cases recognizing either a good or outstanding strength-based approach. ASC's positive approach to market oversight and relationships with providers has resulted in no waiting lists for Care at Home services and no providers handing back contracts in the last 2 years. Safeguarding Adults is at the heart of ASC practice and is supported by a strategic Oldham Safeguarding Adults Board (OSAB). This is a mature board with strong partnerships and a learning culture ethos. The OSAB:

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- Has a strong business plan
 - Shares and embeds learnings from Serious Adult Reviews (SAR)
 - Continues to meet deadlines for implementation of SAR recommendations
 - Has launched the OSAB podcasts on many popular podcast platforms which highlight good safeguarding practice.
 - Has produced eighteen grab guides and 7-minute briefings in 2024-25. Oldham's approach has been considered an area of good practice nationally and is now utilized by other Safeguarding Adults Boards across England.

Other areas the service is proud of relate to ASC's approach to hospital discharge where safe, effective, and timely discharges take place with 93.7% of residents discharged from hospital on their expected date. As well as strong communication and engagement with residents, workforce, and partners.

An area ASC is developing is further work in relation to co-production. At its heart, **co-production** means **working together as equals**, including residents, staff and partners sharing ideas, decisions, and responsibility to design better services side by side. It is a genuine partnership built on trust, respect, and lived experience. ASC has recently held a successful Resident Co-Production Group meeting. Where residents have elected their own Chair, giving the group structure, purpose, and independence. ASC will be publishing a short **"You Said / We Did"** summary to show how resident feedback is already shaping action. The resident group will link directly with our **Workplace Co-Production Steering Group**, ensuring that both residents and the ASC workforce are influencing change. This group will continue to meet monthly.

NHS Reform in Greater Manchester

The new NHS Greater Manchester operating model is now out for engagement with political leaders and key partners. It sets out the proposed operating model for NHS Greater Manchester, following the announcement made by the secretary of State for Health and Social Care in March this year to change the purpose of Integrated Care Boards. The proposed model outlines how integrated working between 'Place Partnerships' (in our case our Oldham Integrated Care Partnership) and GM-wide teams will deliver our vision for longer, healthier lives and reduced health inequalities. It details the guiding principles, governance, and portfolio structures that will underpin strategic commissioning, emphasising a shift towards prevention, equitable access, and community co-design. By aligning resources, accountability, and collaborative leadership across health, care, and community sectors, the model aims to improve outcomes, address the wider determinants of health, and ensure that every resident benefits from a more effective, inclusive, and sustainable health and care system.

Enhancing Adult Mental Health Crisis Services in 2025/26

Much work has taken place in recent months to improve access to mental health professional crisis response within our urgent and emergency care system. The aim is to reduce mental health attendance at A&E, avoid admissions, and support people to stay safe in the community. This has involved the establishing a 111 and 999 Greater Manchester 24/7 First Response Service (24/7 crisis helpline and MH Urgent Triage), delivery of a new Section 136 improvement plan and expanding and improving community crisis mental health models of care including Crisis Resolution, Home Based Treatment, and VCSE-led crisis alternatives, based on the national self-assessment (Men-SAT) recommendations. This is being achieved through new investment in crisis mental health services by reducing out of area placements, a new recruitment drive to boost capacity, work with the VCFSE sector to bring about greater integrated working to improve access to services which are more joined up, introducing digital solutions and enhancing how we use data in the management of care.

Recommendations: Council is requested to note the report.



Portfolio Report

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Mohon Ali, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills.

This report provides an update on the main activity since the last Council meeting relating to portfolio responsibilities.

SEND and Inclusion

Oldham continues to show determination to put children and families at the heart of everything we do. Since the 2023 SEND inspection, confidence in our local offer has grown significantly with four out of five families now telling us they believe in the improvements being made. That's a 13% increase, and more than 80% of families say their child is making real progress.

We are also working closely with schools to prepare for Ofsted's new inspection framework, which has a sharper focus on inclusion. In early November, we brought schools and leaders together for a borough-wide Inclusion Conference — reinforcing our message that in Oldham, every child should be visible, supported, and given the chance to succeed.

Our Local Inclusion Support Offer (LISO) has now gone out to schools and early years providers. This is a practical guide to services and support, with a team of navigators on hand to help schools get children and families the right help at the right time.

Our work on transitions continues at pace. From Year 6 into 7, from early years into primary, and now looking ahead into post-16 pathways, we are making sure that no child slips through the net. 140 home visits were completed to support the move into Year 7, breaking down barriers to attendance and ensuring children feel welcome and ready for the next stage of their journey.

In terms of provision, our capital strategy is further expanding. Phase 3 expressions of interest are out to schools, meaning more new specialist places and improved facilities for children with SEND across Oldham. This builds on our commitment to deliver more local places in inclusive schools, with specialist support available when it is needed.

Attendance and Inclusion

Attendance in Oldham continues to improve. This September, Year 7 attendance hit a record 98.2%, with both primary and secondary attendance climbing compared with last year. We are now outperforming statistical neighbours, and our targeted summer outreach is paying off — helping families with uniform, school readiness, and those crucial first steps into new schools.

Permanent exclusions have reduced by 23%, suspensions are down 28%, and children missing education have fallen by a third, from 269 last year to 185 this year. Behind every one of those numbers is a child who is now in school, learning, and building their future.

This is Oldham at its best: practical support for families, joined-up work across schools and partners, and a relentless focus on keeping children in education.

Quality of Education

Oldham Learning partners came together in September to set out a clear vision for 2025/26: getting the basics right for all children. That means being school ready, attending well, literate and numerate, and having their special needs met.

We are already seeing progress:

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- KS2 results this year are up 2.2 percentage points in Reading, Writing and Maths combined.
 - Writing outcomes in particular have strengthened thanks to targeted improvement work.
 - Ofsted inspections continue to highlight good and improving practice across both primary and secondary schools.

We know there is more to do, especially where schools are below national averages, but our new focus on tracking progress from early years to Year 6 will help identify and address issues earlier.

And we continue to celebrate the achievements of our young people beyond the classroom. Over the summer, Oldham Music Service reached nearly 5,000 pupils across 75% of our schools, delivered a successful tour to Heidelberg, and hosted BBC Philharmonic musicians in local schools. This cultural richness is part of what makes Oldham such a special place for young people to grow up.

Post-16, Skills, Apprenticeships and Adult Learning

Oldham's post-16 and skills work continues to deliver real impact. The Empower Oldham programme is changing lives, with nearly 60% of young people supported into Education, Employment or Training (EET) destinations.

Investment is also flowing into Oldham. We secured £437,000 from GMCA's capital fund, enabling Oldham College to expand capacity by 180 places. A further £1.26 million bid is in progress, which could create an additional 700 places in key sectors like construction, health and early years.

This November will be a big moment for skills in Oldham. We've hosted a revamped Careers Event on 6th November, connecting every school to employers through the MBacc gateways, and providing a quiet session for SEND and NEET learners. On the same day, we launched Oldham's new Employment & Skills Strategy at the Get Oldham Working Summit. This strategy, shaped by the findings of our Skills Commission, sets out a bold plan to align learning and opportunity with Oldham's economic future.

Meanwhile, our Community Grant programme is supporting 17 local projects, many already exceeding their targets, showcasing the strength of Oldham's voluntary and community sector in supporting learning.

And through national partnerships like the Co-operative Councils Innovation Network, Oldham is helping to shape new approaches to NEET prevention that will benefit councils across the country.

Summary

Oldham is once again showing that when it comes to education and skills, we can lead the way. From the confidence families now have in our SEND services, to record-breaking attendance, strong inspection outcomes, and the energy in our skills system — Oldham is ambitious for its children and young people.

I want to thank every teacher, leader, governor, parent, carer, volunteer, and partner for their dedication. Together, we are giving every child the best start in life, and every learner the skills they need to thrive.

Recommendations: Council is requested to note the report.

Portfolio Report

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Peter Dean, Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure.

This report provides an update on the main activity since the last Council meeting relating to portfolio responsibilities.

Events:

- During half term, a series of family friendly activities took place including Halloween Town centre Trail, Halloween Half Marathon and a new fire themed bonfire night celebration. The new event was a huge success with interactive monster lab installations which the Leader and the Mayor took part in and an amazing firework display. Positive feedback from
- The Christmas Lights switch on is planned for Sat 15th November, with music, dance, Father Christmas and Bluey and Bingo from the hit TV show also making an appearance.

Gallery Oldham and Libraries

- Gallery Oldham's much-loved Old Library and Art Gallery building officially reopened on Sat 25th Oct, with stunning new permanent displays celebrating Oldham's history, people and art.
- New exhibition launched, 27th Sept 2025 – 3rd Jan 2026, 'Indian Perspectives' by artists Tony Phillips and Jasmir Creed. The exhibition examines the legacies of British colonial rule of India and the experiences of the people of Indian heritage living in Britain, it features more than 100 drawings and paintings.
- Our Beautiful Oldham project is developing a new nature gallery at Gallery Oldham with Early Years families. So far, we have recruited an Early Years steering group, Hive Mind, who are helping us to co-curate this space. Overall, we have engaged 278 participants with the project so far. Our next event is Toddler Takeover Day, part of Kids in Museums, on Sat 22 November. The new gallery will open in June 2026.
- The newly refurbished library layout at Oldham Library now allows for more flexible spaces to accommodate large scale programming and events, some of which are highlighted below:
- Action Together Volunteering Fair - over 30 organisations were represented from local community gardens to larger organisations like St John's Ambulance
- Healthwatch Oldham - Women's Health Forum. 400 people attended Healthwatch Oldham's marketplace event at Oldham Library, focusing on women's health and wellbeing. The day included health checks, over 20 stalls from health and wellbeing services in Oldham, and two health talks on Breast Screening and Bowel Cancer awareness.
- Menopause Awareness Month. Throughout October we held a range of talks, drop ins, cafes and webinars around menopause and to raise awareness of signs, symptoms and the support available to women in Oldham.

Archives:

- Oldham Archives moved into their new home in Spindles, with a successful open day held on Saturday 27th September. The repository now houses all the archives collections including the Oldham Chronicle archive.
- The Archives also successfully delivered the Oldham Histories Festival, a packed programme with walks, talks and behind-the-scenes tours of the new Oldham Archives. For ticketed events, 198 tickets were booked with several new partners involved in this year's Oldham Histories Festival.

Oldham Theatre Workshop

- Oldham Theatre Workshop moved into their new home in JR Clynes Building, delivering creative sessions for over 600 young people per week.
- The team are working on their new Christmas show Hansel and Gretel at Oldham Library Theatre Space, 4-24 Dec 2025. Tickets are on sale now.

Creativity and Culture

- Dancing Diyas, part of The Indian Association Oldham, and Saddleworth Women's Morris & Clog performed at La Merce, Barcelona's largest annual street festival in September.

Oldham Active – Joint working around Facilities

- I'm pleased to share an exciting example of partnership working between Oldham Active and the Pinnacle Trust who are working together to manage the newly expanded and refurbished 3G pitch at The Hathershaw College when the development is complete later this year. This will maximise the use of the facility for the whole community.
- By working jointly, we're making sure these fantastic spaces are open and accessible—not just for students, but for residents of all ages. It's a great step forward in making the most of what we have, and in supporting healthier, more active lives across the borough

Radclyffe Lights – Progress update

- The running track at Radclyffe Athletic Centre is a much-valued asset in Oldham, supporting local clubs, schools, and community groups, and playing a key role in encouraging active lifestyles and sporting achievement across the borough. We have been working collaboratively to update the lighting systems for the outdoor running track. Initial assessments and options appraisals for the outdoor lights at the Centre are now complete.
- Electrical enabling works have begun, starting with disconnecting faulty fittings and checking if any lights can be safely switched on temporarily. This work will fix electrical faults and upgrade the infrastructure to support new and refurbished lighting. Once complete—expected within 2 to 3 weeks—the main works will begin, including new light fittings and a modern control system.
- The upgraded lighting will meet Class II standards, suitable for regional and club-level competitions, while also improving energy efficiency and the experience for users and spectators. Oldham Active is working closely with Oldham & Royton Harriers to ensure alternative training options are available during the works.

Active Travel – Bikeability

- The Chadderton Activation Scheme delivered a wide range of engagement, training, and infrastructure improvements to promote active travel and wellbeing, engaging over 900 people directly through education sites and community groups, and reaching a further 7,500 more people in Oldham through wider communications. With a budget of £75,000, the programme invested in walking and cycling sessions, training, events, signage, equipment and school resources. Infrastructure improvements created safer, well-lit routes linking key areas like Becker Way to Freehold Metrolink Station via safe crossings. The activation programme delivered a diverse range of initiatives, including Nordic walking sessions, Dr Bike repairs, Scavenger hunts, theatre-based education, heritage walks, wayfinding installations, and communal cycling equipment. Alongside this, Oldham's Bikeability programme reached over 1,600 young people this year, including 734 balance bike participants—well above the target of 165. New tech-integrated sessions in high schools and monthly training calendars are being developed, helping young people build confidence, road safety skills, and independence.

Recommendations: Council is requested to note the report.

Portfolio Report

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Fida Hussain,
Cabinet Member for Enterprise.



This report provides an update on the main activity since the last Council meeting relating to portfolio responsibilities.

Willmott Dixon Supplier Event

Willmott Dixon held a supplier event at the Hive on 24th Sept 25. The purpose of the event was to help local businesses become part of the supply chain working in Oldham and further afield. Over 30 businesses attended the event and heard about the Willmott Dixon NW pipeline of work as well as practical support covering topics such as health and safety, quality, social value and procurement.

Oldham Business Awards

The 17th Annual Oldham Business Awards took place on 3rd Oct at the QE Hall. It was a spectacular night where over 500 guests were treated to dinner, entertainment provided by Justin Moorhouse and The NQBB as well as the presentation of 12 business awards. This year the winner of the Special Recognition Award went to Kim Rogers, funder of Spark Oldham.

Athena Labs Finale Event

The Athena Labs programme provided support for 9 female founders from Oldham who are looking to start their own business in Oldham. As part of the programme they received support on business and financial modelling, accessing funding and investor readiness as well as 1to1 coaching. Each of the founders successfully finished the programme and attended the finale event In Oct in Leeds which provided them with access to ecosystem experts and investors. Going forward it is hoped that each of the founders will continue to work with support providers in Oldham to enable them to start-up and grow their business in the Borough

Employment & Employability**Get Oldham Working – Update (July to October 2025)**

Between July and September 2025, Get Oldham Working (GOW) engaged over 2,400 residents and supported more than 700 people into employment, with several programmes exceeding targets — including Support to Succeed, which achieved 171% of its quarterly start goal, and In-Work Progression, helping over 100 residents move into better jobs or secure pay increases.

Recent independent evaluation work shows employment in Oldham has grown by around 15% over the past decade, highlighting the strength of GOW's locally focused model in sustaining participation and connecting residents furthest from the labour market into work — even amid significant structural and social challenges.

The Oldham Jobs Fair in September drew over 2,200 visitors and 100 employers, with strong engagement from communities in Alexandra, Werneth, Coldhurst, and St Mary's.

GOW also proudly sponsored Oldham Athletic's match against Bromley and the Oldham Business Awards, strengthening partnerships across local business and community sectors.

In recent months, GOW has also been shortlisted for two national ERSA Awards — recognising excellence in Working for Better Work (Health Solutions) and Partnership & Collaboration — alongside leading organisations from across the UK.

We have also secured £266,000 from the national Digital Inclusion Innovation Fund, which will enable new community digital hubs, mobile outreach, and volunteer training to tackle digital exclusion. Meanwhile, collaboration with Muse Developments and the Council's Inward Investment team ensures local people can access opportunities linked to new regeneration projects.

Operationally, GOW continues to modernise delivery with a central triage system, integrated CRM platform, and rollout of Outcome Star, aligned with Live Well Oldham and neighbourhood teams to achieve better outcomes for residents.

Finally, a huge thank you to all GOW staff and partners for their continued dedication to improving employment, wellbeing, and life opportunities for Oldham residents.

Recommendations: Council is requested to note the report.

Portfolio Report

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Chris Goodwin, Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways.

This report provides an update on the main activity since the last Council meeting relating to portfolio responsibilities.

Strategic Transport & Bee Network:

We have been working closely with Transport for Greater Manchester and colleagues across GM to prepare the new Local Transport Plan for Greater Manchester. This will include a Local Implementation Plan for each local authority, setting out a pipeline of transport-related projects to progress under the Local Transport Plan. The draft Plan goes to GMCA on 7 November and, if approved, there will be a public consultation on the draft Plan for 12 weeks between December and February.

We have also recently started a trial for our latest School Street proposal, around St Luke's CofE Primary School in Chadderton. The trial aims to give children the chance to walk, wheel or cycle to school and stay safe on the school journey, while also addressing the high levels of traffic that local residents experience during school drop-off and pick-up times.

One of our CRSTS projects, the Broadway Canal Link, successfully passed the Strategic Outline Business Case stage in October, meaning that the scheme can progress onto public engagement, which is planned for the coming months, followed by a planning application. The project proposes an upgrade to the existing off-road route between Broomes Park and the Rochdale Canal. The scheme will create a 1.2km long and a 3.5m-wide shared path for pedestrians and cyclists, offering a safer, more attractive alternative to busy routes such as Broadway, Middleton Road and Foxdenton Lane. This new connection will strengthen links between Chadderton and Middleton, support the Mayor's Network Vision and Oldham's Cycle Network Masterplan, and contribute to the town's wider active travel ambitions.

Street Lighting:

The annual replacement programme is ongoing and as part of this, 665 columns are planned to be replaced in 2025-26 (Year 3) across two phases in North Chadderton. Phase 1 of 330 lights was successfully completed between March and September, and Phase 2 is underway and is projected to be completed this financial year.

To date, as part of the programme, 1,490 columns have been replaced with another 4,012 to be replaced by the end of March 2031. The programme is based on the age and condition of assets across each ward and replaced on a ward-by-ward basis to minimise network disruption. As a result of the improvement in technology and the upgrades installed, electricity consumption and therefore carbon output are both reduced from the 2024/25 levels.

Finally, the Christmas decoration displays for this year are being installed across the borough; switch-ons are being undertaken with the first event in Oldham Town Centre on Saturday 15 November and then steadily completed across the borough.

Highways:

Gully Cleaning - The planned gully cleansing programme is continuing on a ward-by-ward basis and is in the 11th out of 20 wards – approximately 24,000 gullies have been visited and another 23,500 still to visit. To date, the first pass of the wards has resulted in nearly 75% of gullies being cleared per ward, with approximately 6,000 overall at this point requiring a revisit as they need a complete dig-out or repair. This part of the programme has now also commenced starting back in Alexandra, and any gullies missed during the initial visit will be cleared, and officers are coordinating with ward members to help with parked cars.

We are mindful that winter weather generates additional demand due to excessive rainfall and leaf fall. Therefore, as stated when this programme was initiated, any blocked gullies that pose a risk of property flooding or highway safety will also be visited and cleared in parallel to the above programme.

Winter Maintenance:

The Winter Maintenance service officially started operation in October and will continue for the next 6 months. The Service currently has a stock of 6,000 tonnes in place – grit bins across the borough have been filled and the teams are ready to respond should the need arise.

There are 8 modern, well maintained gritters ready to be used, including 6 standard sized gritters (18 tonnes), one large gritter for the Transpennine routes (26 tonnes), and one much smaller gritter (6.5 tonnes) for the small routes on narrower country lanes when necessary.

The overall operation requires over 28 operatives to be involved, with 14 of these operatives per day if required to cover two shifts over the 24hr period – this involves Highways operatives, help with from other departments.

Last year, which was relatively mild, there were 71 gritting sessions of the primary network over 46 days of active gritting operations – this equates to the gritters having travelled and gritted over 16,000 miles.

Recommendations: Council is requested to note the report



Report to COUNCIL

Members' Allowances Scheme 2025/2026

Officer Contact: Fiona Greenway, Executive Director of Resources

Report Author: Heather Moore, Assistant Director of Governance

Email: heather.moore@oldham.gov.uk

12 November 2025

Reason for Decision

The Council is required to determine a Scheme for Members' Allowances following consideration of a report of an Independent Remuneration Panel convened in accordance with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.

Executive Summary

On 24 April 2025, the Independent Remuneration Panel met to consider a review of the Members' Allowances Scheme which involved looking at benchmarking data from other local authorities and changes within the political arrangements of the council. The Panel also considered proposals to amend the allowance for Independent Members/Persons appointed to the Audit Committee and Standards Committee.

The Panel further met on 21 August 2025, as a result of a review of Members' allowances which was instructed by the Chief Executive, the outcome of which has been subject to a separate report to the Audit Committee. Whilst the investigation outcome is outside the remit of the Remuneration Panel, the Panel were asked to consider the impact in relation to basic allowance and special responsibility allowances, as their previous recommendations were based on incorrect information, which is the reason why the Panel's original report was not presented to the July Council meeting.

Whilst the Council has a duty to have regard to the Panel's recommendations, it is the Council's choice whether to accept the Panel's recommendations in whole or in part, or not at all, or to determine any other scheme for 2025/2026.

Recommendations

It is recommended:

1. That Council considers the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel, and its recommendations, as set out in Appendix 1, and adopts the scheme of allowances as set out in Appendix 2 for the municipal year 2025/26, effective from 1 April 2025.
2. That Council delegates authority to the Assistant Director of Governance in consultation with the Director of Finance and the Director of Legal (Monitoring Officer) to:
 - (i) take all necessary action to implement 1 above;
 - (ii) update the constitution;
 - (iii) to establish an Independent Remuneration Panel to review the scheme of allowances for implementation of the revised scheme from April 2026.
3. That the Independent Remuneration Panel be thanked for its report.

Members Allowance Scheme 2025/2026

1 Background

- 1.1 Section 18 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 permits the Secretary of State, by regulations, to make a scheme providing for the payment of a basic allowance, an attendance allowance and a special responsibility allowance to members of a local authority. Section 100 of the Local Government Act 2000 permits the Secretary of State, by regulations, to provide for travelling and subsistence allowances for members of local authorities, allowances for attending conferences and meetings and reimbursement of expenses. In exercise of these powers the Secretary of State has made the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.
- 1.2 The Members Allowances Scheme for 2025/26 requires to be approved by Council. The Independent Remuneration Panel have considered the scheme, and their report and recommendations are contained at Appendix 1. Other aspects of the Scheme are unchanged (detailed in Appendix 2).

2 Current Position

- 2.1 The Council's Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) has met to review the current Members' Allowances Scheme. The Panel were asked to consider the impact of the review in relation to basic allowance and special responsibility allowances, as their previous recommendations were based on incorrect rates being applied to basic allowance. The Panel's report on the recommended levels of the allowance payments for the 2025/2026 financial year, and other proposed changes to the scheme, is attached as Appendix 1.
- 2.2 Prior to adopting a scheme or amending a scheme the Council must consider a report produced by an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) unless it is the simple application of an index. This index can be applied for a maximum of 4 years at which time the scheme would require further consideration by the IRP and a new scheme adopted by the council.
- 2.3 Whilst the Council has a duty to have regard to the Panel's recommendations, it is the Council's choice whether to accept the Panel's recommendations in whole or in part, or not at all, or to determine any other scheme for 2025/2026.
- 2.4 The Council last considered a report of the IRP at the meeting on 13 March 2024 and adopted a scheme of allowances. Members are requested to consider and decide on the scheme and allowances detailed at Appendix 2, based on the recommendations from the Independent Remuneration Panel.
- 2.5 The Scheme for future years will be presented at the budget meeting of the full council so that appropriate provision can be made.

3 Options/Alternatives

- 3.1 The Council has a statutory duty to support an independent review of its Members' Allowances scheme. It is considered good practice to reconvene an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) periodically ahead of a future fundamental review of the members allowance scheme in part or full.

4 Preferred Option

- 4.1 To give due consideration to the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

5 Consultation

- 5.1 The Independent Remuneration Panel consulted the Group Leader of the Administration, the Group Leaders of the two Main Opposition Groups and the Group Leader of the Minority Opposition at its April meeting.

6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 The proposals recommended by the Independent Remuneration Panel within this report can be met from within the existing revenue base budget provision for Members Allowances.

Vickie Lambert

7 Legal Implications

- 7.1 The Council is required to approve a Members Allowances Scheme.

8 Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People

- 8.1 Members are reminded of the requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to the aims of the Duty at the time the decision is taken. The aims of the Duty are: (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, and (iii) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- 8.2 Protected characteristics: age, gender, disability, race, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief and pregnancy & maternity. Only aim (i) of the Duty applies to marriage & civil partnership.
- 8.3 Although it does not directly relate to protected groups, the draft scheme contains the ability to pay a dependent carers allowance to Councillors. This contributes to aims 1 and 2 of the Equality Act as it removes barriers to Councillors standing who have relatives that may be in need of dependent care.

9 **Key Decision**

9.1 No. Decision for the full council.

10 **Key Decision Reference**

10.1 N/A

11 **Background Papers**

11.1 The following is a list of background papers on which this report is based in accordance with the requirements of Section 100(1) of the Local Government Act 1972. It does not include documents which would disclose exempt or confidential information as defined by the Act:

Members' allowances file

12 **Appendices**

12.1 Appendix 1: Independent Remuneration Panel report and allowances recommendations

Appendix 2: Members Scheme

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Independent Remuneration Panel Report 2025/2026

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) was convened to advise Oldham Council on its scheme of allowances for its Elected Members.
- 1.2 The Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) comprises Peter Claber (Chair), John Barlow and Geoffrey Millard, who have all undertaken this role for many years. The IRP undertook a comprehensive review of Members Allowances for 2023/2024 and therefore the review for 2025/2026 has built on the recommendations arising from the previous review. Recommendations had been formulated by the Panel at its meeting on 24 April 2025; however, the Panel further met on 21 August 2025, following a review of Members' Allowances. Whilst the outcome of the review is outside the remit of the Remuneration Panel, the Panel were asked to consider the impact in relation to basic allowance and special responsibility allowances and make a recommendation.
- 1.3 The IRP at its April meeting considered information gathered by officers. The Panel also met with the Group Leader of the Administration, the Group Leaders of the two Main Opposition Groups, and the Group Leader of the Minority Opposition Group. A written representation was also received from the Chair of the Audit Committee regarding remuneration of independent members on the Audit Committee.
- 1.4 At its August meeting, the Panel considered the implications in respect of the outcome of the review work and the impact on basic and special responsibility allowances from 2022/2023. The Panel reviewed the financial information which had been gathered to date and were updated on improved control measures which would be introduced, all of which would be subject to a report to the Audit Committee.
- 1.5 The Panel noted that once Full Council have agreed the Members' Allowance Scheme, they are not involved in the operational administration of the process, for example, they do not submit claims for basic allowance or special responsibility allowance, it is purely a procedural matter for which officers are responsible for implementing.
- 1.6 The Panel acknowledges the hard work undertaken by Elected Members on behalf of the public and expresses its appreciation to all those Members who gave up their time to meet with them. The Panel learnt a great deal from those contributions which form the basis for the recommendations in this report, together with the legal framework setting the Panel's remit.

- 1.7 The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 require Councils to appoint an IRP and to have regard to its recommendations prior to amending their scheme of allowances.
- 1.8 Under Regulation 10 (5) of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, Local Authorities 'cannot rely on an index for Elected Member allowances for more than 4 years' before they invite the IRP to make further recommendations on the application and relevance of the index. In 2024/2025, the Panel recommended that Member basic and special responsibility allowances should be uplifted in line with any National Joint Council Pay award salary increases awarded to employees on Grade SCP 49.

2 Context and Current Scheme of Allowances

- 2.1 All Elected Members, irrespective of particular offices held on the Council, are entitled to the same level of basic allowance. Basic allowances are intended to reflect the expected time commitment of all its Elected Members. This includes, but is not limited to:
- Preparation and attendance at Council meetings and committees.
 - Meetings with residents and Council officers.
 - Responding to and dealing with casework and enquiries.
 - Knowing their ward and being aware of any issues.
 - Attending events within their local community, supporting and helping local community groups.
 - Leading local campaigns on behalf of residents.
 - Being an advocate for residents.
 - Keeping residents informed on issues that affect them.
 - Participating in activities of an outside body to which they are appointed.
 - Working with local organisations, interest groups and businesses.
 - Representing and supporting residents and communities.
 - Attending training and development events, including mandatory training.
- 2.2 The Panel were presented with details of how the nationally agreed pay award had been applied from 2022/2023, noting it had not yet been applied for 2025/2026.

Financial Year	Correct Basic Allowance	Approved % increase	Actual Paid	Annual Variance	Variance to date	Actual £ increase	Actual % increase
2021/22	£10,151		£10,151				
2022/23	£10,502	3.46%	£10,459	(£43)	(£43)	£308	3.04%
2023/24	£10,910	3.88%	£10,922	£12	£12	£463	4.42%
2024/25	£11,182	2.50%	£12,212	£1,030	£1,030	£1,290	11.81%
2025/26	£11,540	3.20%	£12,212	£672	£336	£0	0.00%

3 The Panel's Considerations

- 3.1 The Panel met with political leaders in April including the Administration, the two Main Opposition Groups and the Minority Opposition Group, to greater understand the responsibility attached to the role of being an Elected Member, including those with special responsibilities. The Panel acknowledged the commitment of time and effort of Elected Members and their role as community leaders.
- 3.2 The Panel considered the benchmarking information of allowances paid in other local authorities across Greater Manchester and Oldham's statistical neighbours. This information showed that the actual allowance payment of £12,212 placed Oldham Councillors closer to the mid-point when compared to others, and that the correct basic allowance of £11,540 would place Oldham Councillors towards the bottom when compared to others.

Authority	Basic Allowance	Date
Stockport	£ 11,059.87	May 2025
Trafford	£ 11,072.33	May 2025
Oldham	£11,540.34	Correct rate 2025/2026
Bury	£ 11,954.00	May 2025
Oldham	£12,212.04	IRP recommended rate 2025/2026
Bolton	£12,227.22	May 2025
Rochdale	£12,701	July 2021 (indexation for 4 years has been added to this figure)
Salford	£ 13,199.24	May 2025
Wigan	£ 14,822.00	May 2025
Tameside	£ 18,501.00	April 2025
Manchester	£ 20,703.08	May 2025

- 3.3 The Panel discussed the findings from the review including the issue of the national pay award being applied incorrectly to members allowances from 2022/2023. The Panel were concerned that applying the correct allowance of £11,540 retrospectively would place Oldham Councillors close to the bottom of the benchmarking, which may deter people standing for office.
- 3.4 The Panel considered the learning from other councils who had applied a methodology to calculate the basic allowance. This was based on the median gross daily salary for a full-time employee in the borough to better reflect local circumstances. The methodology includes a remunerated amount, based on the Local Government Association's (LGA) Councillor Census Survey in 2022 showing how much time Councillors spend on duties, and also an unremunerated amount, known as Public Service Discount. In Oldham the median gross salary for a full-time employee is £127.04. The average hours a Councillor works per week is 23.4 (taken from the LGA survey) and the Panel were minded to apply 35% Public Service Discount (equating to 53 days), which would leave 99 remunerated days totaling £12,573. The Panel agreed this methodology may be beneficial to use for the 2026/2027 scheme, which they would consider and make recommendations as part of the Council's budget setting process.

- 3.5 The Panel were of the view that introducing a methodology would provide greater consistency and they therefore proposed to recommend that the current basic allowance (£12,212.04) should remain in place. Whilst the panel noted that this would in real-terms, mean an increase in allowances, the panel were satisfied that this would mean that Oldham Councillors would remain closer to the mid-point when compared to other councils in Greater Manchester, and the allowance would better reflect local circumstances.
- 3.6 The Panel enquired about the Council's policy regarding overpayments. They noted that overpayments are re-claimed, generally over the period of time that the overpayment was made. However, it was noted that there is flexibility within the policy so that the individual does not face undue hardship, whilst still making payments to recover the full amount. The Panel were of the view that Councillors and former Councillors who have been overpaid, including those who have been paid two special responsibility allowances, should pay back monies over an agreed period of time related to personal circumstances.
- 3.7 The Panel enquired about Councillors and former Councillors who have been underpaid, and they were of the view that they should receive a letter stating the amount, with details of how to request that the allowance be paid.
- 3.8 The Panel noted that special responsibility allowances (SRAs) are calculated as a percentage of the Executive Leader's, which has traditionally been considered by Panels to be three times the basic allowance. The Panel saw no reason to alter that assessment and noted that this approach was widely recognised as standard practice. The exceptions to the indexation of the Executive Leader's allowance include roles in Greater Manchester, Chairs of Audit and Standards and the Mayor and Deputy Mayor allowance.
- 3.9 The Panel considered the current political context, whereby there are two Main Opposition Groups of equal number. The Panel were of the view that in circumstances where there is more than one Main Opposition Group of equal number, the scheme should provide an allowance for each Main Opposition Leader and Deputy Main Opposition Leader. In line with advice from the Local Government Association, the Panel were recommending that the allowance should be indexed at the same rate, which is currently 50% less than the Executive Leader, in line with the current members' allowances scheme.
- 3.10 The Panel considered representation in relation to the challenges of recruiting to the independent roles on the Audit Committee and Standards Committee. Having considered benchmarking information, the Panel recommend that the flat fee of £1200 be paid as an allowance to co-opted/independent members/persons serving in the Audit Committee or Standards Committee.
- 3.11 The Panel heard representations from some Group Leaders, who asked the Panel to review the remuneration of the Deputy Executive Members and District Leads, with a view to removing or reducing this allowance; together with representations on how Elected Members are appointed to those roles. Having considered all representations, the Panel were of the view that there should be no change to the SRA for Deputy Executive Members or District Leads for 2025/2026; however, as part of the Panel's work for the 2026/2027 allowances scheme, they would wish to review the workloads of the roles of Deputy Executive Members and District Leads

to consider evidence of what has been delivered over the past year to inform recommendations for the 2026/2027 report. The Panel noted it was not within their Terms of Reference to make recommendations in relation to the process of appointments, as this was a matter for the full council or the Leader depending on the role.

- 3.12 The Panel considered the requirement of the Council for all Elected Members to have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and to subscribe to the DBS Update Service for ongoing checks to be made without the need to submit new applications each time. The Panel proposed to recommend under Regulation 10(3) of the 2003 Regulations, to amend the scheme to include this as an authorised administrative reimbursement.

4.3 Summary of recommendations

The Independent Remuneration Panel recommend the following to Council for due consideration:

1. That the Independent Remuneration Panel in 2026/2027 be requested to review the SRA for the roles of Deputy Executive Members and District Leads, seeking evidence of workloads and what has been delivered over the past year to inform recommendations for the 2026/2027 report.
2. That the current members' allowances scheme, as set out in Appendix 2, be updated to include the following:

1.	The current basic allowance of £12,212.04 should remain in place which would better reflect local circumstances, as this was closer to the new methodology the panel had agreed in principle to apply to next year's scheme; noting that this annual allowance in real-terms was an increase, but would mean that Councillors remain closer to the mid-point when compared to other council's in Greater Manchester.
2.	Allowances remain aligned to the pay award agreed for officers on grade SCP 49 of the National Joint Council for Local Government Services terms and conditions; however, no uplift should apply for 2025/2026.
3.	To include a separate authorised reimbursement category in the allowance scheme for a payment to Councillors for the DBS Update Service, as it is expected that Elected Members sign-up to this.
4.	In circumstances where there is more than one Main Opposition Group of equal number, the scheme should provide a Special Responsibility Allowance for each Main Opposition Leader and Deputy Main Opposition Leader. In line with advice from the Local Government Association, the allowance should be indexed at the same rate, which is currently 50% less than the Executive Leader, in line with the current members' allowances scheme.

5.	That a flat fee of £1200 be paid as an allowance to co-opted/independent members/persons serving on the Audit Committee and/or Standards Committee.
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Oldham Council Scheme of Members Allowances 2025/2026

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council has adopted this Scheme of Members Allowances.

2. The Basic Allowance

- 2.1 The basic allowance is paid to all members of the Council and paid to individual members proportionate to the number of days served by that member within a particular year. The Basic Allowance is set out in paragraph 7 below.
- 2.2 The basic allowance is aligned to the pay award agreed for officers on grade SCP 49 of the National Joint Council for Local Government Services terms and conditions, for a maximum of four years, upon which time the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) would review further. The scheme is currently in year two and will require further consideration by the Independent Remuneration Panel by no later than the 2027/2028 scheme.

3. Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA)

- 3.1 Special responsibility allowances are paid to members where they undertake specific duties and responsibilities. The special responsibility allowances are set out in paragraph 7 below.
- 3.2 The special responsibility allowance will be proportionate to the number of days where the member undertakes such special responsibilities and indexed at a percentage of the Executive Leader role.
- 3.3 No member is entitled to more than one SRA where it relates to internal Council business.
- 3.4 Where there is more than one Main Opposition Group of equal number, the scheme will provide an allowance for each Main Opposition Leader and Deputy Main Opposition Leader.

4. Dependants Carers Allowance

- 4.1 The Dependants Carers Allowance is paid in respect of expenses necessarily incurred in arranging for the care of children or dependants to allow:-
- a) The attendance at a meeting of the Council, Cabinet, Committees or Sub-Committees or of any other body to which the Council makes appointments or nominations or any other committee or sub-committee of such body.
 - b) The attendance at any other meeting, the holding of which is authorised by the Council, a Committee, a Sub-Committee or a Joint Committee provided that it is a meeting to which at least two political groups have been invited.
 - c) The attendance at a meeting of any association of authorities of which the Council is a member.
 - d) The performance of any duty in connection with the discharge of any function of the Council conferred by or under any enactment and empowering or requiring the Council to inspect or authorise inspection of premises.

Oldham Council Scheme of Members Allowances 2025/2026

- e) The carrying out of any other duty approved by the Council or the Chief Executive for the purpose of or in connection with the discharge of the functions of the Council or any of its committees or sub-committees including attendance on a training development course for the purpose of fulfilling the duties of an elected member.

4.2 A dependant is defined as someone who is living with a member and is:-

- A child aged 15 or under.
- An elderly relative requiring full time care.
- A relative with disabilities who requires full time care.

4.3 A member claiming the allowance shall provide medical or social work or other evidence that care is required for the purpose of the audit as requested.

4.4 The allowance shall not be payable in respect of care provided by a member of the Councillor's immediate family or household.

4.5 The carer's allowance will be capped at a maximum of ten hours in any week and the hourly rate will be the National Living Wage hourly rate. Hours may be calculated from the time of leaving home to the time of returning home following attendance on Council business as detailed above.

5. Travel and Subsistence allowances

5.1 Travel and subsistence allowances are paid in respect of expenses necessarily incurred in the exercise of duties and responsibilities shown at paragraph 4.1 above outside of the borough only. The amounts payable are indicated in Paragraph 7 of the scheme. Claims under paragraph 4.1 and 5.1 shall be made in writing to the Chief Executive within three months of the date of which the entitlement to the allowance arises.

6. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Update Service

6.1 The Council requires all Elected Members to have a DBS check. The Members' Allowance Scheme shall provide for the Council to reimburse Councillors for the cost of subscribing to the DBS Update Service. Payment under this paragraph shall be treated as a specific administrative reimbursement under this scheme.

7. Allowance

7.1 A member may, by notice in writing to the Chief Executive, elect to forgo their entitlement or any part of their entitlement to allowances.

Oldham Council Scheme of Members Allowances 2025/2026

8. Members' allowances

Basic Allowance	Index	Amount 2025/2026
All Members of the Council		£12,212.04
Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA)	Index	Amount 2025/2026
Executive Leader	100%	£36,636.12 £6,708.52 (for Greater Manchester Combined Authority duties)
Deputy Leader	70%	£25,645.28
Executive Members	60%	£ 21,981.67
Deputy Executive Member	25%	£9,159.03
Leader of Main Opposition	50%	£18,318.06
Deputy Main Opposition Leader	20%	£7,327.22
Minority Opposition Leader (provided the group has 6 members)	15%	£5,495.42
Chairs of:	30%	£10,990.84
Licensing		
Planning		
Children and Young People Scrutiny Board		
Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Board		
Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board		
Governance, Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board		
Health and Wellbeing Board	20%	£ 7,327.22
District Leads: Central, North, East, South and West		

Oldham Council Scheme of Members Allowances 2025/2026

Appointed Deputy District lead	20% of District Leads SAR	£1,465.44
Chair of Audit Committee	n/a	£ 2,473.81
Chair of Standards Committee	n/a	£781.26
Co-opted/Independent Members of Audit and Independent Persons on Standards Committee	n/a	£1,200
Greater Manchester Transport Committee/Bee Network Committee	n/a	£4,561.00
Greater Manchester Chair of Overview and Scrutiny (paid by Greater Manchester Combined Authority)	n/a	£10,311.00
Greater Manchester Scrutiny Panel Member (paid by Greater Manchester Combined Authority)	n/a	£3,437.00
Greater Manchester Scrutiny Panel substitute members (paid annually by Greater Manchester Combined Authority)	n/a	£571.00
Greater Manchester Overview and Scrutiny Committee substitute members' attendance per meeting (paid annually by Greater Manchester Combined Authority)	n/a	£144.00
Council representative on the Greater Manchester Pension Fund (GMPF) (paid by GMPF)	n/a	£1,460.00
Travel and Subsistence		Amount 2025/2026
Refreshment Allowance	n/a	£8 Lunch and £14 Evening meal
Mileage	n/a	0.45p per mile for first 10,000 miles, outside the borough, per annum and a rate of 0.25p per mile over 10,000 miles, outside the borough
Other Authorised Reimbursement		Amount 2025/2026
All Members of the Council Disclosure and Barring (DBS) Update Service		£16.00 , or the rate charged by the DBS should this change

Oldham Council Scheme of Members Allowances 2025/2026

Civic Allowances		Amount 2025/2026
Mayoral Allowance	n/a	£ 17,544.16
Deputy Mayoral Allowance	n/a	£ 3,446.73

No member is entitled to more than one SRA where it relates to internal Council business.

Section 3(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 provides for the council to pay the Mayor/Deputy Mayor allowances, but these are not defined as a Special Responsibility Allowance under the Members' Allowances Regulations 2003, but they are included in the published scheme for transparency purposes.

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Report to Council

Oldham Council Annual Report 24/25

Portfolio Holder:

Councillor Arooj Shah, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Building a Better Oldham

Officer Contact: Steve Hughes, Assistant Director of Strategy & Transformation

Report Authors: Jonathan Downs, Corporate Policy Lead / James Mulvaney, Policy Manager

12 November 2025

Reason for Decision

The Oldham Council Annual Report 2024/25 marks the first opportunity to reflect on the progress made since the launch of our Corporate Plan 2024–2027. It highlights the difference the Council has made over the past year – from delivering better services and investing in our neighbourhoods, to supporting residents and businesses through change. The report is designed to celebrate success, show how our priorities are being turned into action, and give a clear picture of the positive impact we are making for Oldham.

Executive Summary

The Oldham Council Annual Report 2024/25 reflects on the first year of delivering our Corporate Plan 2024–2027. It captures the progress made against our key priorities and highlights how the Council is working to make a real difference for residents, communities and businesses. Achievements over the past year include progress on the regeneration of Oldham town centre, the delivery of new housing, improvements to frontline services, and investment in cleaner, greener initiatives that support our climate ambitions.

Recommendations

1. Note the content of the Oldham Council Annual Report 24/25

1. Background

- 1.1. In 2024, Oldham Council published its Corporate Plan 2024–2027, setting out a clear vision and priorities for the borough over a three-year period. The Corporate Plan provides a shared framework that guides decision-making, directs resources, and ensures the Council remains focused on delivering the outcomes that matter most to residents, communities and businesses.
- 1.2. As part of this commitment, the Council publishes an Annual Report to track progress against the Corporate Plan and demonstrate the impact of our work. The 2024/25 Annual Report is the first of these updates. It highlights what has been achieved in the first year of delivery and provides a foundation for accountability, transparency and continuous improvement.

2. Current Position

- 2.1. This Annual Report provides a comprehensive overview of the Council's progress in the first year of delivering the Corporate Plan 2024–2027. It captures achievements across our priorities, from investing in services and regeneration to improving the quality of life for residents.
- 2.2. The report features case studies that bring this progress to life – including the development of Family Hubs, which are providing joined-up support for children and families, and the recognition of Oldham's Children's Services as Good by Ofsted, reflecting the dedication of our workforce. It also highlights major investments such as the £20 million to get Oldham growing, significant improvements in housing standards and new housebuilding, and the Council's leadership of regeneration projects that are reshaping the town centre and neighbourhoods. Together, these achievements show the Council delivering on its commitments and building strong foundations for the years ahead.
- 2.3. Another key development in the past year was Oldham Council's award for Most Improved Council from the LGA. This was a significant milestone following numerous measures of improvement which have been undertaken since the LGA peer review in 2023.

3. Options/alternatives

- 3.1. Option 1: Note the content of the Oldham Council Annual Report 24/25.
- 3.2. Option 2: Do not note the content of the Oldham Council Annual Report 24/25.

4. Preferred Option

- 4.1. Option 1 would be the preferred option, acknowledging the work of the council over the past year and supporting the missions and priorities outlined in the Corporate Plan.

5. Consultation

- 5.1. N/A

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. All actions outlined within the Oldham Council Annual Report have been funded through existing resources. No additional financial obligations are anticipated.

(Matthew Kearns – Finance Manager)

7. Legal Services Comments

- 7.1. The report simply seeks to note the Council's annual report. There are no legal implications contained in this report's options. The recommended option is however supported to help ensure maximum resident focus and a regular update on the objectives of the Council. (*Alex Bougatef – Director of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer*)

8. Community cohesion, including crime and disorder implications in accordance with Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

- 8.1. None

9. Equality Impact – including implications for Children and Young People

- 9.1. N/A (James Mulvaney, Policy Manager)

10. Key Decision

- 10.1. No

11. Background Papers

- 11.1. None

12. Appendices

- 12.1. The Oldham Council Annual Report 24/25

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Report to Council

The Leading Oldham Partnership Impact Report 24/25

Portfolio Holder:

Councillor Arooj Shah, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Building a Better Oldham

Officer Contact: Steve Hughes, Assistant Director of Strategy & Transformation

Report Authors: Jonathan Downs, Corporate Policy Lead / James Mulvaney, Policy Manager

12 November 2025

Reason for Decision

The Leading Oldham Partnership Impact Report 2024/25 showcases the progress we have made together since the launch of Pride, Progress, Partnership last year. It captures the real impact of our shared ambitions and highlights achievements across our communities, the economy and public services, while being honest about the challenges we face. By bringing partners and residents into one story of change, the report helps us celebrate success, learn from experience, and focus our collective energy on the opportunities ahead.

Executive Summary

The Leading Oldham Partnership Impact Report 2024/25 captures the progress made in the first year of delivering Pride, Progress, Partnership. It highlights how partners across the borough have worked together to make Oldham a great place to live, grow and thrive. Examples of what's been achieved range from major regeneration projects in the town centre and new housebuilding, to initiatives that support people directly in their day-to-day lives.

Recommendations

1. Note the content of the Leading Oldham Partnership Impact Report 24/25
2. Acknowledge the continued work of the partnership to improve the Borough.

1. Background

- 1.1. The Oldham Partnership brings together business, community, and public sector leaders from across Oldham to tackle the challenges we face together. By working across different sectors, we can create lasting positive change for everyone in Oldham.
- 1.2. The Oldham Plan is a blueprint for the borough, setting out the collective vision for Oldham over the next six years. The Plan provides a shared roadmap for addressing key challenges such as health inequalities, housing, economic growth, and environmental sustainability.
- 1.3. When Pride, Progress, Partnership was published in 2024, we made a clear commitment to provide an annual update to Council on the impact of the Oldham Plan. This update is designed to track progress against our shared missions, highlight achievements delivered through partnership working, and ensure that members and residents can see the difference being made year on year. The 2024/25 Impact Report is the first of these annual updates.

2. Current Position

- 2.1. Oldham is one year into delivering the ambitions set out in Pride, Progress, Partnership, and positive change is beginning to take shape. The regeneration of the town centre is well underway, with visible improvements that are helping to build confidence in Oldham's future. New housing developments are creating more places for people to live, while community-led initiatives are tackling everyday challenges. Programmes such as Inclusive Bytes are supporting residents to overcome digital exclusion, and the expansion of the Live Well model is helping more people access the support they need to live healthier, happier lives.

3. Options/alternatives

- 3.1. Option 1: Note the content of the Leading Oldham Partnership Impact Report 24/25 and acknowledge the continued work of the Leading Oldham Partnership. This course of action acknowledges the important work of Oldham Council's strategic partners and the significance of our cooperation.
- 3.2. Option 2: Do not note the content of the Leading Oldham Partnership Impact Report 24/25. This option would potentially undermine the efforts of the Leading Oldham Partnership.

4. Preferred Option

- 4.1. Option 1 would be the preferred option, supporting and acknowledging the effective and strategic action with our partners.

5. Consultation

- 5.1. N/A

6. Financial Implications

6.1 All actions set out within the Leading Oldham Partnership Impact Report are either undertaken by our partners or have already been funded through existing council resources. No further financial obligations are anticipated

(Matthew Kearns – Finance Manager)

7. Legal Services Comments

7.1. The report seeks to note the Report. There are no legal implications contained in this report's options. The recommended option is however supported to help ensure maximum resident focus and a regular update on relevant projects and Council objectives. (Alex Bougatef – Director of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer)

8. Community cohesion, including crime and disorder implications in accordance with Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

8.1. None

9. Equality Impact – including implications for Children and Young People

9.1. N/A (James Mulvaney, Policy Manager)

10. Key Decision

10.1. No

11. Background Papers

11.1. None

12. Appendices

12.1. The Leading Oldham Partnership Impact Report 24/25

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Pride, Progress, **PARTNERSHIP.**

Impact Report 24/25

Page 104



Foreword

When we launched the Oldham Plan—Pride, Progress, Partnership— last year we were clear: no single organisation can deliver the kind of change our borough deserves. It takes all of us, working together, with a shared purpose, shared values and a shared responsibility.

This first annual Partnership Report shows what that looks like in practice.

Over the past 12 months, our partners across public services, the voluntary and community sector, education, health, and business have stepped up—not just to deliver services, but to drive real change. From our first digital inclusion deep dive to the delivery of new homes and community facilities, from grassroots health work to bold regeneration plans, we've shown what we can achieve when we work as one team for Oldham.

Our three missions—**Healthier, Happier Lives**, **a Great Place to Live**, and a **Green and Growing** borough—have never felt more relevant. They've helped bring focus and clarity to our collective ambition, and they've given us a common language for talking about what matters to residents.

This report highlights just a few of the stories behind that work, but they all point to the same truth: **partnership working isn't a nice-to-have, it's essential.** Whether we're supporting families, tackling inequality, or building a greener economy, we are stronger, smarter and faster when we act together.

So, thank you to every organisation, frontline worker, volunteer, and resident who has contributed to this journey so far. The foundations are strong, and the next year is all about building on them.

Let's keep going, together.

‘Celebrating our success!’

“Our dream at Oldham Athletic is to lead a proper, positive, and sustainable change for Oldham – not just for the football club, but for the town as a whole.

We want to inspire pride, opportunity, and progress in every corner of our community, creating a legacy that lasts well beyond the pitch.

What a year it’s been – not just for Oldham Athletic, but for Oldham as a whole.

Our promotion back to the Football League has been a landmark moment for the club, but more than that, it’s a symbol of belief. Belief in the people, in the passion that runs through this place, and in what’s possible when you work with focus, with purpose, and with a team around you that refuses to give up.

In many ways, that same spirit is what’s driving the change we’re seeing across Oldham right now. From housing and regeneration to health and green spaces, we’re building momentum – and doing it together. As a club, we’re proud to be part of that, and proud to be part of the Leading Oldham Partnership.

This year’s announcement of Oldham SportsTown is a game-changer. SportsTown isn’t just about sport – it’s about sport, health, wellness, and education. It shows that what happens off the pitch is just as important as what happens on it. It’s about wellbeing, opportunity, community, and ambition. It’s about giving our young people pathways to thrive – and putting pride back into our neighbourhoods.

At Oldham Athletic, we believe in this town. And we believe in what partnership can achieve. The work ahead won’t always be easy – but if the last year has shown us anything, it’s that when Oldham pulls together, we can go further than anyone expects.

Here’s to building on that success – and to the season ahead.

Foreword

Darren Royle,
Chief Executive,
Oldham Athletic AFC



Introduction

Last year, we launched the Oldham Plan: Pride, Progress, Partnership—a shared vision for the future of our borough, rooted in ambition, collaboration, and a renewed sense of local pride. This marked the beginning of a new chapter for Oldham and the recharged Leading Oldham Partnership, which now brings together leaders, organisations, and communities around a common purpose.

As we approach the first anniversary of the Oldham Plan, this inaugural ‘annual report’ serves as a moment of reflection and accountability. It offers an honest look at the progress we’ve made so far and the challenges we continue to face. It is the first in what will become an annual record of the collective journey we are on—one defined by shared ownership and responsibility for Oldham’s future.

Our work is shaped by three bold missions:

Healthier, Happier Lives

A Great Place to Live

Green and Growing

These missions are more relevant than ever, resonating strongly with the current national focus on health, place-based regeneration, and sustainable growth. They are the lens through which we align our efforts and measure our progress.

Over the past year, we’ve seen early signs of momentum. We launched our first Policy Deep Dive, exploring key issues in greater detail to drive better, evidence-led collaborative decision making. Regeneration of the town centre continues to transform the heart of Oldham, making it a more vibrant, accessible, and future-ready place. And the exciting announcement of Oldham SportsTown has laid the foundations for a borough-wide movement to harness the power of sport to inspire pride, wellbeing, and opportunity.

There is still a long road ahead. But with strong foundations in place and a clear sense of direction, this report sets out not only where we are—but where we’re heading, together.

MISSION

Healthier Happier Lives

Case Study SportsTown

Building Healthier, Happier Lives Through Sport

In March 2025, Oldham took a significant step towards enhancing community well-being with the announcement of a £5 million investment to initiate SportsTown—a visionary £70 million sports, education, health, and wellbeing campus centered around Boundary Park. This ambitious project aims to transform local opportunities, fostering a new era for sport and health in the borough.

A Catalyst for Community Health and Wellbeing

SportsTown is designed to deliver state-of-the-art sporting, health, and educational facilities, directly supporting the “Healthier, Happier Lives” mission. By providing essential services and much-needed facilities on-site, the initiative seeks to improve health outcomes and promote active lifestyles among residents.

The project builds upon a previous £1 million investment by Oldham Council, which funded a new playing surface at Boundary Park. This development secured a permanent home for Oldham RLFC, enhancing community access to high-quality sports facilities.



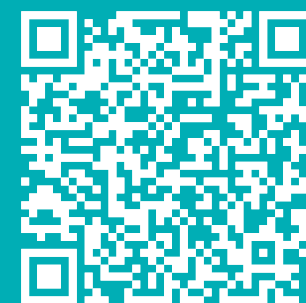
Educational and Career Opportunities

Beyond physical health, SportsTown is set to create real educational and career opportunities in sports, health, and related fields. The initiative aligns with the findings of the Oldham Economic Review Board and the Oldham Economic and Skills Strategy, aiming to harness the power of sport, health, wellness, business, and education to benefit the community.

A Collaborative Vision for the Future

The success of SportsTown is rooted in collaboration among Oldham Council, Boundary Park owner Frank Rothwell, Oldham Athletic AFC, and Oldham Rugby League Football Club. Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) provided £5 million through the Greater Manchester Strategy Fund, while Oldham Active will act as the local delivery partner for sports and wellbeing. This partnership exemplifies the collective commitment to creating opportunities for residents and ensuring that communities can grow and lead healthier, happier lives.

SPORTSTOWN
OLDHAM



SCAN
ME

Healthier Happier Lives

Case Study **The New Day Care Centre**

In December, Oldham celebrated the opening of Age UK Oldham's 2nd day care centre dedicated to promoting independence for residents living in Oldham who need care and support in later life. Housed in their large bungalow in the heart of a residential community, the facility offers a welcoming, homely environment where people spend the day joining in activities, socialising with their peers and enjoying home cooked nutritious meals.

A Collaborative Approach to Care for Older people

This centre exemplifies the power of partnership in addressing community needs. Oldham Council has always championed day care for older people with assessed care needs, and this collaborative approach gives all older people choice through care packages, direct payments and self-funding which invigorates a sense of community and shared responsibility.

Promoting Healthier, Happier Lives

Aligned with Oldham's mission to promote "Healthier, Happier Lives," the day care centre plays a crucial role in supporting the physical and mental health of older residents. Through various programs and activities, the centre encourages active lifestyles, social engagement, and continuous learning, all of which contribute to overall wellbeing.

Looking Ahead: Opportunities for Further Collaboration

The centre opens doors for future partnerships aimed at expanding services and reaching more residents. By continuing to work together, stakeholders can develop innovative solutions to meet the evolving needs of Oldham's aging population, ensuring that every individual has the opportunity to lead a fulfilling and healthy life.

"Day care services like this give great social benefits to those who attend and help people and their families to connect, whilst also combating loneliness"



Great Place to Live

Case Study Bridging the Digital Divide

In January 2025, Oldham hosted its inaugural Leading Oldham Partnership policy deep-dive event, bringing together organisations from across the borough to address the pressing issue of digital exclusion. This collaborative effort aimed to position Oldham as one of the UK's most digitally inclusive towns.

A Unified Approach to Digital Inclusion

The event marked a significant step in building connections among the Leading Oldham Partnership, Inclusive Bytes, Tameside Community Computers, and GMCA, who provided £70,000 in funding. The event focused on increasing residents' access to digital services within a 15-minute walk from their homes, along with how businesses and organisations can save money on recycling technology by repurposing technology for those who don't have devices to get online.

“As a part of my time with Inclusive Bytes I have run workshops with a variety of people, teaching them how to use various websites and digital tools, and learning online safety. It has become easier to talk with people each time, and as I have become more familiar with and passionate about explaining things, these conversations with new people now come naturally.”

Inclusive Bytes Young Volunteer



Innovative Solutions: H.O.O.T Hubs

A key development shared and expanded on the day was the establishment of H.O.O.T Hubs (Hands On Opportunities in Tech) across public spaces in Oldham. These hubs provide residents with support in getting online, completing digital forms, and accessing various online resources, thereby nurturing digital literacy and inclusion.

Empowering the Community

The deep-dive event also emphasised the importance of promoting awareness of social tariffs and increasing the number of organisations with dedicated digital champions and data banks. This holistic approach ensures that residents are not only connected but also supported in navigating the digital landscape.



Great Place to Live

Case Study

Reviving Oldham Coliseum

Oldham's cultural ambitions are rooted in the belief that culture thrives when it created with, by, and for our communities. By working cooperatively through Oldham's cultural partnership, we are bringing together historical cultural institutions, artists, residents, and business to share resources, ideas and opportunities.

In a remarkable demonstration of community spirit and collaboration, the historic Oldham Coliseum Theatre is set to reopen its doors in 2026, following a successful campaign to save the venue from closure. This £10 million refurbishment project, supported by £6.1 million from the Towns Fund and the remainder from Oldham Council's regeneration budget, underscores the borough's commitment to preserving its cultural heritage and enhancing community spaces.

A Collaborative Effort

The revival of the Coliseum is a testament to the power of partnership. Oldham Council, local artists, community groups, and passionate residents united to advocate for the theatre's restoration. The appointment of heritage contractor Tilbury Douglas to lead the refurbishment further exemplifies this collaborative approach, bringing expertise to breathe new life into the Fairbottom Street venue.

Enhancing Accessibility and Heritage

The refurbishment includes extensive structural changes to improve accessibility, such as the removal of asbestos and the creation of more wheelchair-accessible backstage entrances. These upgrades ensure that the Coliseum remains a welcoming space for all members of the community, preserving its rich history while adapting to contemporary needs.

A Vibrant Programme Ahead

While renovations are underway, the Coliseum continues to engage audiences through a collaborative programme of shows at various venues across Oldham. The Spring Programme 2025 features a diverse lineup of comedy, music, and theatre, showcasing the borough's creative talent and commitment to accessible arts.

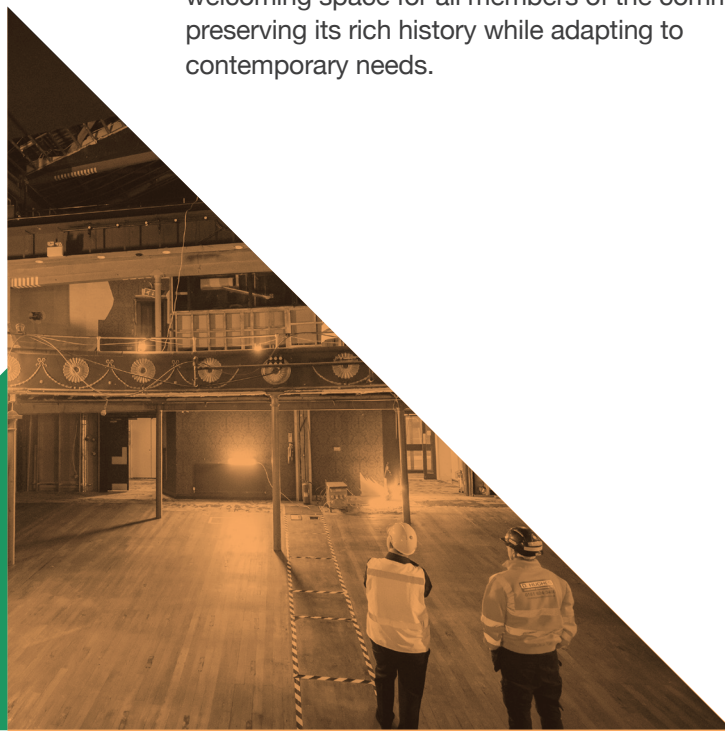
Additionally, initiatives like the "Crafted" programme support local artists in developing and presenting original works, fostering a nurturing environment for creative expression.

Looking Forward

The reopening of the Oldham Coliseum Theatre symbolizes more than the restoration of a building; it represents the resilience and unity of a community dedicated to creating a vibrant, inclusive, and culturally rich environment. As the theatre prepares to welcome audiences once again, it stands as a beacon of what can be achieved through collective effort and shared vision.

"We're excited for the future, and will be a key part in taking Oldham audiences with us"

Julie Hesmondhalgh



Northern Roots

A £13 million ground breaking project will bring a new visitor centre, café, and forestry hub to the Northern Roots site next to Alexandra Park, with the centre expected to open by summer 2026, providing our residents with skills, support opportunities, and an enhanced local environment.

The site has also been bolstered with over £249,000 in new funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund, Northern Roots is taking a bold step forward in transforming 160 acres of underused urban green space into a living landscape of opportunity, sustainability, and pride.

This isn't just about land—this is about legacy.

Northern Roots is more than a regeneration project. It's a movement to create a community-powered destination where Oldhamers can grow food, learn new skills, discover wildlife, spark creativity, find employment, and connect—both with nature and with one another.

This latest project will celebrate the rich natural, social, and industrial heritage of the site, spotlighting the incredible legacy of working-class scientific and environmental pioneers like James Neild, and community-led movements like the Oldham Microscopical Society, which continues to inspire curiosity and conservation to this day.

£13 Million ground breaking project



£249,000
in new funding from
The National Lottery
Heritage Fund

Northern Roots shows the power of partnerships in action—between charities, funders, ecologists, museums, and most importantly, residents. This is what the Green and Growing mission is all about: creating a borough where the natural environment flourishes, people thrive, and heritage is a living, growing part of daily life.

As we head toward 2026, Northern Roots will continue to sow the seeds of hope, resilience, and regeneration—bringing people together to nurture a greener, more connected future for Oldham.

Thanks to funding granted by the National Lottery, Northern Roots will be able to:

- Create local jobs and training, including roles for Citizen Researchers, Citizen Rangers, and Heritage Champions
- Empower local people to explore, preserve, and share Oldham's heritage
- Support Northern Roots' vision to open as a major visitor destination by 2026—with people and place at its core

From seasonal wildlife surveys to creative storytelling and hands-on conservation, the community will be at the centre of shaping the future of Northern Roots.



Green and Growing

Case Study

FCHO Delivering Homes

Oldham Council's housing partner, First Choice Homes Oldham (FCHO), has delivered a range of high-quality, eco-friendly homes across the borough, supporting economic growth, community wellbeing, and sustainable living.

West Vale, Coldhurst

88 Apartments and family homes

Overview:
One of the largest social housing schemes in Greater Manchester, West Vale replaces the outdated tower blocks (Crossbank and Summervale) with a modern, attractive neighbourhood of 88 high-quality homes.

What's Being Delivered:
A mix of townhouses and apartments, all energy-efficient with the latest air source heat pumps, accessible, and affordable.

Partnership:
Delivered by FCHO, supported by Homes England and Oldham Council, and built by Caddick, with a focus on high-quality design and placemaking.

Impact:
Transforming a previously underused estate into a vibrant, safe, and sustainable community hub in the heart of Oldham.

Hardman Street, Failsworth

14 Affordable, Green Homes

Overview:
A £3.7 m development of 14 family homes (seven 3-bed, five 2-bed shared ownership, and two 2-bed affordable rent), situated on long-term brownfield land.

Sustainability & Support:
All homes designed to EPC B standards, funded by Homes England, and constructed by Lancet Homes

Wellyhole Street, Lees

17 Modern Family Homes

Overview:
£3.2 m investment delivering 17 three-bedroom houses for affordable rent, developed off-plan from an existing estate.

Community Benefit:
Aligned with Council housing allocations, offering energy-efficient new homes to residents

Farrow Street, Shaw

10 New Family Homes

Overview:
Transformation of a former bowling green into ten four-bedroom homes (five for shared ownership, five for affordable rent).

Sustainability:
Designed with a "fabric-first" approach, achieving EPC B ratings; built by Beardwell Developments with support from Homes England .

Cherry Avenue, Alt

38 Eco-Homes Completed

Overview:
A previously vacant brownfield site reimaged into 38 two- and three-bedroom homes for affordable rent.

Sustainability:
Built 15% more energy-efficient than required, with enhanced insulation, reducing energy bills for tenants.

Community Impact:
Funded by Homes England (£1.5 m), delivered by Tyson Construction, and enhanced the precinct through waste-clearance activities and community projects.



The year ahead

will be one of continued delivery across Oldham. With the Oldham Plan setting a clear direction, partners from across sectors are stepping forward with purpose — working together to improve lives, tackle inequality, and create opportunity.

Below is a snapshot of what to expect under each of our shared missions.

Healthier Happier Lives

Northern Care Alliance

will expand delivery of its integrated 0–19 health service offer, working closely with Family Hubs, GPs and early years providers to support children's health and development in neighbourhood settings.

Your Health Oldham (ABL Health)

will target support for smoking cessation, weight management and long-term conditions—building on work that has helped Oldham deliver some of the strongest quit rates in Greater Manchester.

Action Together and VCFSE partners

will strengthen social prescribing pathways and wellbeing activities for older people and carers, using data from health services to target those most at risk of isolation or poor mental health.



Great Place to Live

First Choice Homes Oldham

will begin letting the first homes at West Vale and move ahead with development at South Werneth, Derker and Shaw—delivering more affordable, energy-efficient homes across the borough.

Greater Manchester Police (Oldham)

will continue to embed neighbourhood policing across the borough and work with the Council and youth services on violence reduction programmes in hotspot areas.

Oldham College

will expand its T Level and apprenticeship offer with employers across health, care, digital and construction—helping local people access training linked to real job opportunities.

Oldham's Digital Inclusion Partnership

will grow digital access through device loan schemes, digital support sessions and connectivity solutions in community settings, building on learning from the borough's first digital policy deep dive.



Green and Growing

Northern Roots

will deliver construction of its Visitor Centre and Forestry Skills Hub, offering new training, enterprise and volunteering opportunities ahead of its full opening as a visitor destination in 2026.

Oldham Council and Oldham Athletic Community Trust

will begin implementing the SportsTown vision, including capital improvements to local sports facilities and work to open up sport and physical activity to all ages and backgrounds.

Oldham Minewater District Heat Network

is a project using heat from disused coal mines to power council buildings, cultural venues and homes. Supported by over £10 million in government and GMCA funding, with further private investment to follow, the scheme will save around 3,700 tonnes of CO₂ a year once operational.

Environmental partners and local schools

will collaborate on a new climate education initiative focused on green careers and environmental action—ensuring young people are equipped for the low-carbon future Oldham is building.



Pride, Progress, **PARTNERSHIP.**



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Report to COUNCIL

Oldham Children, Young People and Families Plan 2025-26

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Shaid Mushtaq, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

Officer Contact: Julie Daniels, Executive Director Children and Young People

Report Author: Sheila Garara, Assistant Director Children's Services Integration

Ext. 0161 770 3105

12/11/2025

Reason for Decision

The Oldham Children, Young People and Families Plan 2025-26 has been presented to and considered by Julie Daniels, Executive Director Children and Young People, the Children's Achieving Excellence Board, the Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Children and Young People Scrutiny Board.

The plan requires Council approval.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Oldham Children, Young People and Families Plan 2025-26 detailed in appendix 1 be approved.

Oldham Children, Young People and Families Plan 2025-26**1 Background**

- 1.1 Under Part 2: Article 4 of the Article of the Constitution, Council is required to approve the Children and Young People Strategic Plan.
- 1.2 The Oldham Children, Young People and Families Plan 2025-26 sets out the strategic direction for the children and young people directorate, taking a partnership approach to achieving our ambition and outcomes so that Oldham is a community where children, young people and families thrive and lead healthier, happier lives.
- 1.3 This plan has been developed based on local management information and performance and quality assurance data and intelligence to meet the needs of children, young people and families in Oldham.

2 Current Position

- 2.1 This plan has been presented to and considered by Julie Daniels, Executive Director Children and Young People, the Children's Achieving Excellence Board, the Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Children and Young People Scrutiny Board.
- 2.2 The plan outlines across Children's Social Care and Early Help and Education, Early Years, Skills and SEND the key strategic priorities (4 P's), change and improvement programmes, Key Performance Indicators (as reported in the quarterly Performance Assurance Report), and the Risks that could impact the delivery of the plan, with clear mitigating actions to prevent risks being realised.
- 2.3 Progress of the plan will be monitored by the Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Children and Young People Scrutiny Board.

3 Options/Alternatives

- 3.1 As it is outlined in the Article of the Constitution Policy Framework, it is not possible to provide an alternative option to this plan.

4 Preferred Option

- 4.1 To approve the Children, Young People and Families Plan 2025-26.

5 Consultation

- 5.1 Service leaders and the workforce continue to have a relentless focus on providing timely, high quality support and intervention work with children, young people, and families, and are driving ambitious and innovative transformation within a culture of continuous learning and improvement.
- 5.2 Council-wide and partnership strategies with an increased focus on early intervention and prevention in local communities seek to address the high levels of demand for statutory services. Additionally, through the continued delivery of this plan, Children and Young People Services in Oldham are keeping children and young people safe, improving

outcomes and are in a strong position to further improve the delivery of timely and effective services to children, young people and their families.

6 Financial Implications

6.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report. (Nicola Harrop – Finance Manager)

7 Legal Implications

7.1 No legal implications identified (Mike Grocott Solicitor)

8 Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People

8.1 Not required as the recommended option is for services to continue.

9 Key Decision

9.1 No

10 Key Decision Reference

11.1 N/A

12 Background Papers

12.1 None

13 Appendices

13.1 Appendix 1 – Oldham Children, Young People and Families Plan 2025-26



CYP Business Plan
25-26.pdf

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Report to COUNCIL

Electronic Voting

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Jabbar, Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services and Sustainability

Officer Contact: Executive Director of Resources

Report Author: Heather Moore

Email: heather.moore@oldham.gov.uk

12 November 2025

Reason for Decision

The report outlines a change to the Constitution to enable electronic voting, and to clarify the procedure for use of electronic voting.

Recommendations

1. That the Constitution be updated to include the changes set out in paragraphs 3.2 and 3.3 of this report.

Electronic Voting

1 Background

- 1.1 The Council's Constitution sets out the way in which voting takes place at meetings of the Council or its committees. The Constitution currently provides for voting to take place by way of a show of hands or affirmation of the meeting if there is no dissent, unless a recorded vote is requested.
- 1.2 There is already a procedure in the Constitution for recording the way votes are cast, which involves each councillor declaring how they are voting. A recorded vote will be taken on the requisition of any member supported by five other Members. The results of a recorded vote will be set out in the minutes of the relevant meeting.
- 1.3 The Council Chamber in the JR Clynes Building has facilities to enable electronic voting to produce quick, accurate numbers of members voting for, against or abstaining on a motion. The system also records the way that each member casts their vote. Each Member has a desk unit which houses a microphone, LCD screen and buttons to vote for a motion, against a motion, or to abstain from voting.

2 Current Position

- 2.1 The Guide and Summary of the Constitution currently states:

"Decisions are made by a majority of the Members at meetings by a show of hands or by affirmation of the meeting if there is no dissent, unless a recorded vote is requested."
- 2.2 Paragraph 16 of the Council Procedure Rules in the Constitution currently states:

16. VOTING

16.1 Majority

Unless this Constitution or the law provides otherwise, any matter will be determined by a show of hands, and by a simple majority of those Members voting and present in the room at the time the question was put.

16.2 Chairman's Casting Vote

In the case of equality of votes, the Mayor shall have a second or casting vote.

16.3 Recorded Vote

If required by law or on the requisition of any member supported by five other Members who signify their support by show of hands before the voting on any question, the vote shall be recorded as to how each Member present and voting gave his/her vote. Immediately after any vote is taken at a budget meeting of the Council there must be recorded in the minutes of the proceedings of that meeting the names of the members who cast a vote for the decision or against the decision or who abstained from voting . " Budget decision

meeting “ means a meeting of the Council at which it makes a calculation under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 or issues a precept under Chapter 4 of Part 1 of that Act.

16.4 Individual Member Recorded Vote

Where, immediately after a vote is taken at a meeting of the Council, any Member so requires, the Minutes of Council will record whether that person cast his or her vote for the question or against the question, or whether he/she abstained from voting.

16.5 Voting on Appointments

16.5.1 Where there are more than two persons nominated for any position to be filled by the Council, and of the votes given there is not a majority in favour of one person, the name of the person receiving the least number of votes of those present and voting shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote shall be taken, and so on until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person.

16.5.2 Where there are at any time two or more vacancies on the same body to be filled by the Council and more persons are nominated to fill those vacancies, each vacancy shall be dealt with separately in accordance with paragraph a) above.

3. **Proposal**

- 3.1 To ensure there is a consistent approach for the operation of electronic voting, it is recommended that the following procedure will be followed, and that this be included in the Constitution.

Procedure for Electronic Voting

- a. The Mayor/Chair will confirm that all are clear about the motion to be voted upon and declare when the vote is open.
- b. The vote will be open for 20 seconds and Members must cast their vote in this time, using the desk unit to buttons to vote whether they are for the motion/question/decision, against the motion/question/decision, or to abstain from voting.
- c. Members can change their vote while the vote is open. However, their vote cannot be altered once the vote has been closed.
- d. The Mayor/Chair will announce that the vote is closing and confirm the vote is closed after 20 seconds have passed.
- e. The outcome of the vote will be displayed on television screens in the Chamber. The clerk will check the number of votes cast does not exceed the number of Members in attendance and then the Mayor/Chair will announce the outcome of the vote.
- f. The vote will only take effect once the outcome is confirmed by the Mayor/Chair.
- g. Where a simple majority of those Members voting and present in the room at the time the question was put is required (i.e. there is no request for a recorded vote), the outcome of the individual electronic votes will not be published in Minutes, but will be displayed on the television screens in the Council Chamber so that those present can see how the majority decision was reached. A record of individual electronic votes will only be retained where a recorded vote has been requested.
- h. The Mayor/Chair may decide at any time to discontinue use of the electronic voting system if satisfied that it is not working correctly. If the Mayor/Chair considers that there has been any malfunction of the equipment or any incorrect use of it, s/he may require or allow the vote to be retaken, either electronically or by show of hands.
- i. If the vote is tied and the Mayor/Chair needs to make a casting vote, the casting vote shall be made verbally.

3.2 It is proposed to update the Guide and Summary of the Constitution as follows:

“Decisions are made by a majority of the Members at meetings by a show of hands, or by use of the Council’s electronic voting system if any, or by affirmation of the meeting if there is no dissent, unless a recorded vote is requested, in which case the Council’s electronic voting system may be used, or where an electronic system is not working correctly or unavailable, the Mayor/Chair will take the vote by roll call”.

3.3 It is proposed to update Paragraph 16 of the Council Procedure Rules in the Constitution with the procedure set out in 3.1 of this report, and to make the following changes:

16. VOTING

16.1 Majority

Unless this Constitution or the law provides otherwise, any matter will be determined by a show of hands, or by use of the Council’s electronic voting system if any, or by affirmation of the meeting if there is no dissent, and by a simple majority of those Members voting and present in the room at the time the question was put.

16.2 Procedure for Electronic Voting

- j. The Mayor/Chair will confirm that all are clear about the motion to be voted upon and declare when the vote is open.
- k. The vote will be open for 20 seconds and Members must cast their vote in this time, using the desk unit to buttons to vote whether they are for the motion/question/decision, against the motion/question/decision, or to abstain from voting.
- l. Members can change their vote while the vote is open. However, their vote cannot be altered once the vote has been closed.
- m. The Mayor/Chair will announce that the vote is closing and confirm the vote is closed after 20 seconds have passed.
- n. The outcome of the vote will be displayed on television screens in the Chamber. The clerk will check the number of votes cast does not exceed the number of Members in attendance and then the Mayor/Chair will announce the outcome of the vote.
- o. The vote will only take effect once the outcome is confirmed by the Mayor/Chair.
- p. Where a simple majority of those Members voting and present in the room at the time the question was put is required (i.e. there is no request for a recorded vote), the outcome of the individual electronic votes will not be published in Minutes, but will be displayed on the television screens in the Council Chamber so that those present can see how the majority decision was reached. A record of individual electronic votes will only be retained where a recorded vote has been requested.
- q. The Mayor/Chair may decide at any time to discontinue use of the electronic voting system if satisfied that it is not working correctly. If the Mayor/Chair considers that there has been any malfunction of the equipment or any incorrect use of it, s/he may require or allow the vote to be retaken, either electronically or by show of hands.
- r. If the vote is tied and the Mayor/Chair needs to make a casting vote, the casting vote shall be made verbally.

16.3 Chairman's Casting Vote

In the case of equality of votes, the Mayor shall have a second or casting vote.

16.4 Recorded Vote

If required by law or on the requisition of any member supported by five other Members who signify their support by show of hands before the voting on any question, the vote shall be recorded as to how each Member present and voting gave his/her vote. The procedure outlined in Paragraph 16.2 shall be followed for electronic voting, or where an electronic system is not working correctly or unavailable, the Mayor/Chair will take the vote by roll call. Where recorded votes are requested, the Minutes of the Council/Committee will record whether that person cast his or her vote for the question or against the question, or whether he/she abstained from voting.

16.5 Recorded Vote at Budget Council

Immediately after any vote is taken at a budget meeting of the Council, there must be recorded in the minutes of the proceedings of that meeting, the names of the members who cast a vote for the decision or against the decision or who abstained from voting . “ Budget decision meeting “ means a meeting of the Council at which it makes a calculation under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 or issues a precept under Chapter 4 of Part 1 of that Act. The Procedure outlined in Paragraph 16.2 and 16/4 shall be followed for recorded votes at the budget meeting of the Council.

16.6 Individual Member Recorded Vote

Where, immediately after a vote is taken at a meeting of the Council, any Member so requires, the Minutes of Council will record whether that person cast his or her vote for the question or against the question, or whether he/she abstained from voting.

16.7 Voting on Appointments

16.7.1 Where there are more than two persons nominated for any position to be filled by the Council, and of the votes given there is not a majority in favour of one person, the name of the person receiving the least number of votes of those present and voting shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote shall be taken, and so on until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person.

16.7.2 Where there are at any time two or more vacancies on the same body to be filled by the Council and more persons are nominated to fill those vacancies, each vacancy shall be dealt with separately in accordance with paragraph a) above.

4 Options/Alternatives

- 4.1 To not introduce electronic voting.

5	Preferred Option
5.1	To introduce electronic voting to produce quick, accurate numbers of members voting for, against or abstaining on a motion, and in the case of recorded votes, to show how each member has cast their vote, rather than the Mayor/Chair having to take a roll call, which would take more time.
6	Consultation
6.1	None.
7	Financial Implications
7.1	None.
8	Legal Implications
8.1	The use of an electronic voting system will not deprive councillors from voting nor from requesting a recorded vote (names of Councillors are recorded against their vote). The Council's Constitution would be updated to reflect the use of the Electronic Voting system.
9	Procurement Implications
9.1	None.
10	Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People
10.1	No
11	Key Decision
11.1	No.
12	Key Decision Reference
12.1	N/A.
13	Background Papers
13.1	None.
14	Appendices
14.1	None.



Report to COUNCIL

Review of Political Balance on Committees

Officer Contact: Heather Moore, Assistant Director of Governance

Report Author: Peter Thompson, Interim Head of Democratic Services

Ext. 4716

12th November 2025

Reason for Decision

Since the last meeting of the Council, on 16th July 2025, the Chief Executive received notification, on Friday 12th September 2025, that Councillors Ball, Quigg and Wilkinson will henceforth sit as Reform UK Members and Monday, 6th October that Councillors Adams and Arnott have joined the Conservative Group.

Considering this, the Council is asked to review the political composition of committees and to note the composition of the political groups as previously notified under Regulation 8 (1) of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 and under Section 15 and 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 for the remainder of the 2025/26 municipal year. The effect, in terms of committee places is that the Conservatives will gain the seats that the Royton Local group held on Planning Committee, Licensing Committee and the Adults Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board but will cede their seat on the Audit Committee to Reform UK. Reform UK will have seats on the Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board, the Children and Young People Scrutiny Board, the Audit Committee, the Commons Registration Committee, the Charitable Trust Committee and the Appeals Committee. The Royton Independents will cede their seat on the Children and Young People Scrutiny Board to the Conservative Group but will gain a seat on the Governance, Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board.

Recommendations

- (a) That the revised composition of the political groups as shown in paragraph 1.1, below, be noted.

-
- (b) The number of seats on the various Committees for the remainder of the 2025/26 Municipal Year be as detailed in paragraph 1.5, below, be noted.
 - (c) Any outstanding appointments to be delegated to the Chief Executive in accordance with the wishes of the relevant political group.

Appointment of Committees and Composition of Political Groups

1 Background

The Council is asked to review the political composition of committees and to note the composition of the political groups as previously notified under Regulation 8 (1) of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990. On 12th September 2025, Councillors Ball, Quigg and Wilkinson gave notice that they will henceforth serve on the Council as Reform UK members. The Leader of the Reform UK Group of Members will be Councillor Quigg. On Monday, 6th October, Councillors Adams and Arnott gave notice that they will, with immediate effect be joining the Conservative Group. The Conservative Group will now contain six Councillors. There are no longer any members of the Council who are not affiliated to any political group represented on the Council.

The effect in terms of committee places are that the Conservatives will gain the seats that the Royton Local Group held on Planning Committee, Licensing Committee and the Adults Social Care and Health Scrutiny Board. Reform UK will have seats on the Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board, the Governance, Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board, the Children and Young People Scrutiny Board, the Commons Registration Committee, the Charitable Trust Committee and the Appeals Committee.

1.1 Political Groups

Council is asked to note that the composition of the political groups, as previously notified under Regulation 8 (1) of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, is: -

(i)	The Labour Group	27	Members
(ii)	The Liberal Democrat Group	9	Members
(iii)	The Oldham Group	9	Members
(iv)	Conservative Group	6	Members
(v)	Reform UK	3	Members
(vi)	Failsworth Independent Party	2	Members
(vii)	Royton Independents	2	Members
(viii)	The Independent Group	2	Members

- The Labour Group comprises: Councillors Shah (Leader), Taylor, Mohon Ali, Aslam, Bashforth, Brownridge, Charters, Chauhan, Cosgrove, Davis, Dean, Goodwin, Harrison, A. Hussain, F. Hussain, J. Hussain, S. Hussain, Iqbal, Islam, Jabbar, Malik, McLaren, Moores, Mushtaq, Nasheen, Rustidge and Shuttleworth.
- The Liberal Democrat Group comprises: Councillors Sykes (Leader), Al-Hamdani, Bishop, Hamblett, Harkness, Kenyon, Marland, Murphy and Williamson.
- The Oldham Group comprises: Councillors Ghafoor (Leader), Akhtar, Zaheer Ali, Azad, Chowhan, Ibrahim, Kouser, Sheldon and Wahid
- The Conservative Group comprises: Councillors Woodvine (Leader), Adams, Arnott, Byrne, Lancaster and Sharp.
- The Reform UK Group comprises: Councillors Quigg (Leader), Ball and Wilkinson.

- f. The Failsworth Independent Party comprises: Councillors Hobin (Leader) and Hindle.
- g. The Royton Independents comprises; Councillors Hurley (Leader) and Hughes.
- h. The Independent Group comprises Councillors Hince (Leader) and Navesey

1.2 Political Balance

There are four statutory principles of political balance which have to be applied in filling appointments to Committees. These are contained in S15(5) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

The principles have to be applied in priority order as follows:-

- (i) That not all seats on the body are allocated to the same political group.
- (ii) That the majority of the seats on the body are allocated to a particular political group if the number of persons belonging to that group are a majority of the Authority's membership.
- (iii) Subject to paragraphs (a) and (b) above, that the number of seats on the ordinary committees of a relevant Authority which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the total of all the seats on the ordinary committees of that Authority as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the Authority; and,
- (iv) Subject to paragraphs (i) to (iii) above, that the number of seats on the body which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the same number of all seats on that body as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the Authority.

The political group sizes as a percentage of the total membership of the Council are:-

Labour Group	$27/60 \times 100 = 45\%$	$125 \text{ seats} \times 45\% = 56.25$	56 seats
Liberal Democrat Group	$9/60 \times 100 = 15\%$	$125 \text{ seats} \times 15\% = 18.75$	19 seats
Oldham Group	$9/60 \times 100 = 15\%$	$125 \text{ seats} \times 15\% = 18.75$	19 seats
Conservative Group	$6/60 \times 100 = 10.00\%$	$125 \text{ seats} \times 10.00\% = 12.5$	12 seats
Reform UK	$3/60 \times 100 = 5\%$	$125 \text{ seats} \times 5\% = 6.25$	6 seats
Failsworth Independent Party	$2/60 \times 100 = 3.33\%$	$125 \text{ seats} \times 3.33\% = 4.16$	4 Seats
The Independent Group	$2/60 \times 100 = 3.33\%$	$125 \text{ seats} \times 3.33\% = 4.16$	4 seats
Royton Local Group	$2/60 \times 100 = 3.33\%$	$125 \text{ seats} \times 3.33\% = 4.16$	4 seats
Royton Independents	$2/60 \times 100 = 3.33\%$	$125 \text{ seats} \times 3.33\% = 4.16$	4 seats

1.3 The application of these percentages to the number of seats on individual Committees gives the following allocation of seats: -

COMMITTEE SIZE	Labour (L)	Liberal Democrat (LD)	Oldham Group (OG)	Conservatives (C)	Reform UK	Failsworth Independents (FIP)	The Independent Group (TIG)	Royton Independents (RI)
16	7.20	2.40	2.40	1.60	0.80	0.53	0.53	0.53
15	6.75	2.25	2.25	1.50	0.75	0.50	0.50	0.50
14	6.30	2.10	2.10	1.40	0.70	0.46	0.46	0.46
13	5.85	1.95	1.95	1.30	0.65	0.43	0.43	0.43
12	5.40	1.80	1.80	1.20	0.60	0.39	0.39	0.39
11	4.95	1.65	1.65	1.10	0.55	0.36	0.36	0.36
10	4.50	1.50	1.50	1.00	0.50	0.33	0.33	0.33
9	4.05	1.35	1.35	0.90	0.45	0.29	0.29	0.29
8	3.60	1.20	1.20	0.80	0.40	0.26	0.26	0.26
7	3.15	1.05	1.05	0.70	0.35	0.23	0.23	0.23
6	2.70	0.90	0.90	0.60	0.30	0.19	0.19	0.19
5	2.25	0.75	0.75	0.50	0.25	0.16	0.16	0.16
4	1.80	0.60	0.60	0.40	0.20	0.13	0.13	0.13
3	1.35	0.45	0.45	0.30	0.15	0.10	0.10	0.10

1.4 Under the political balance rules after these percentages have been applied to the total number of seats on Committees of the Council any remaining seats must be allocated to members who are not Members of any political group. Applying political balance as detailed above, the allocation of seats, to the current committee structure, would be as follows:-

Committee	Seats	L	LD	OG	C	RUK	FIP	TIG	RI
Planning	16	7	2	2	2	1	1	1	1
Licensing	15	7	2	2	1	1	1	1	1
Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board	11	5	2	2	1	0	0	0	0
Governance, Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board	11	5	2	2	1	0	0	0	0
Adults Social Care and Health Scrutiny Board	11	5	2	2	1	0	0	0	0
Children and Young People Scrutiny Board	11	5	2	2	1	0	0	0	0
Audit Committee	9	4	1	1	1	0	0	0	0

Employment Committee	7	3	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Appointments Committee	7	3	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Commons Registration	4	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Charitable Trust Committee	6	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Standards Committee	7	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Highway Regulation Committee (formerly TRO Panel)	5	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Appeals Committee	5	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Total	125	56	20	20	10	2	2	2	2

The above calculation leaves 11 committee places to be allocated.

1.5 Adjustment of Seats

In accordance with the rules of political balance, so far as practicable, the number of seats must be allocated to accord with the rules above. It is therefore proposed that the number of seats on the various Committees for the remainder of the 2025/26 Municipal Year be fixed as follows:-

Committee	Seats	L	LD	OG	C	RU K	FI P	TI G	RI
Planning	16	7	2	2	2	0	1	1	1
Licensing	15	7	2	2	2	0	1	1	0
Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board	11	5	2	2	1	1	0	0	0
Governance, Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board	11	5	2	2	1	0	0	0	1
Adults Social Care and Health Scrutiny Board	11	5	1	2	2	0	0	0	1
Children and Young People Scrutiny Board	11	5	1	1	2	1	1	0	0
Audit	9	4	2	2	0	1	0	0	0
Employment Committee	7	3	1	1	1	0	0	1	0
Commons Registration	4	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Appointments Committee	7	3	1	1	1	0	0	1	0
Charitable Trustee Committee	6	3	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
Standards Committee	7	3	1	1	1	0	1	0	0

Highways Regulation Committee (formerly TRO)	5	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	1
Appeals Committee	5	2	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
Total	125	56	19	19	13	6	4	4	4

- a. The Health and Well Being Board is not included in the calculation above. Although the Committee is appointed by Council, the Local Authority (Public Health and Well Being Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013 provide for the disapplication of Section 15 and 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989
- b. Annual Council on 21st May 2025 appointed a District Lead for each District Area and 2 Deputy District Leads for North and East District.
- c. It was previously agreed that the standards sub-committee, dealing with assessments or hearings will consist of 5 members with 2 Members from the Labour Group and one each from the Liberal Democrat Group, Conservative Group and the Oldham Group who have seats on the Standards Committee.

- 1.6 Substitutes are to be appointed by the political groups in accordance with the Substitute Scheme contained in the Constitution. Substitutes for Overview and Scrutiny Boards may be nominated up to a maximum of the number of Members of that Group serving on the Board. Substitutes are not permitted for Licensing. For the Planning Committee, up to 16 substitutes are to be nominated in accordance with the political balance of each Committee. Council is also asked to appoint substitutes to the Highways Regulation Committee, the Audit Committee and to the four Overview and Scrutiny Boards.
- 1.7 Council is asked to note the revised political composition of the Committees; to determine the allocation of seats to political groups; and to make the appointments to fill the seats in accordance with Sections 15 and 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations.

2 Options/Alternatives

- 2.1 To approve the report.
Not to approve the report

3 Preferred Option

- 3.1 To approve the report.

4 Consultation

- 4.1 Consultation has taken place with relevant officers and Councillors.

5 Financial Implications

- 5.1 n/a

6 Legal Implications

- 6.1 There are no legal implications.

7	Equality Impact – including implications for Children and Young Persons
7.1	N/A
8	Key Decision
8.1	No
9	Key Decision Reference
9.1	N/A
10	Background Papers The following is a list of background papers on which this report is based in accordance with the requirements of Section 100(1) of the Local Government Act 1972. It does include documents which would disclose exempt or confidential information as defined by the Act: Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990. Local Government and Housing Act 1989. Contact: Peter Thompson – peter.thompson@oldham.gov.uk , or, JR Clynes Building, Cultural Quarter, Greaves Street, Oldham, OL1 1AT
11.	Appendices None



Report to COUNCIL

Independent Member of Audit Committee

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Abdul Jabbar, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services and Sustainability

Officer Contact: Executive Director of Resources

Report Author: Heather Moore, Assistant Director of Governance

Email: heather.moore@oldham.gov.uk

12 November 2025

Reason for Decision

The Audit Committee has a leading role to play in ensuring that the Council's governance and internal control arrangements are effective and contribute to the mitigation of risks. As the complexity of Council operations, and especially of the financial accounts, increases, it is important that the Committee is resourced to play its part in mitigation of risks that may arise from areas that it oversees. The introduction of a suitably skilled and experienced second independent member would strengthen the Audit Committee and ensure that the Committee complies with best practice.

Recommendations

1. That Mr Stuart Green be appointed as the second independent member of the Audit Committee, for a four year term ending at the end of the municipal year 2029, and that authority be delegated to the Chief Executive to finalise the conditions of appointment to this role.
2. That the second Independent Member be appointed to the position of Vice Chair of the Audit Committee.

Appointment of Independent Member of the Audit Committee**1 Background**

- 1.1 The Council has undertaken a recruitment process to appoint to the position of Independent Member on the Audit Committee. The recruitment panel comprised the Independent Chair of the Audit Committee, the Executive Director of Resources and the Monitoring Officer supported by the Head of Internal Audit and the Assistant Director of Governance. If appointed, the second independent member would be invited to serve for a term of office of four years. It is a matter for full Council to confirm this appointment.
- 1.2 The Audit Committee, at its meeting on 23rd July 2025, supported the nomination of Councillor Al-Hamdani as the Vice Chair of the Committee; however, the appointment is a matter for determination by the full Council. It is recommended that the second Independent Member be appointed as the Vice Chair of the Audit Committee to support the current Independent Chair of the Audit Committee, which is seen by Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) as best practice.

2 Options/Alternatives

- 2.1 The Council could decide not to appoint the recommended candidate, and a further selection process would need to be undertaken. The Council could invite nominations for the role of Vice Chair of the Audit Committee.

3 Preferred Option

- 3.1 To accept the recommendation to appoint to the position and that the second Independent Member be appointed as Vice Chair of the Audit Committee.

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 Independent Members are paid an allowance as detailed within the Council's approved Members Allowance Scheme. There is budgetary provision within the Council's revenue base budget and as such there is no adverse financial impact as a result of this appointment.

Vickie Lambert

5 Legal Implications

- 5.1 The responsibility of appointments is a matter of the full Council.

6. Procurement Implications

- 6.1 None.

7 Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People

- 7.1 No.

8	Key Decision
8.1	No.
9	Background Papers
9.1	None.
10	Appendices
10.1	None.

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